



No. CCLII.]

Contents

[OCTOBER 1903

PAGE

Nature's Comedian. Chapters VII., VIII. 481

By W. E. NORRIS

Wagers 499

By D. H. WILSON

Last Year 507

By A. C. S.

A Michaelmas Move. 508

By CHAS. FIELDING MARSH

Loafing-time 523

By FRED WHISHAW

Jellyby's Plot. 539

Egyptian Irrigation Works 550

By LAWRENCE GIBBS, A.M.Inst.C.E.

Scholarship Howlers 559

By G. STANLEY ELLIS

At the Sign of the Ship 562

By ANDREW LANG

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY



STORIES OF IRISH LIFE.

By E. OE. SOMERVILLE and MARTIN ROSS.

AN IRISH COUSIN.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION. Crown 8vo. 6s.

*** This book was originally published by Messrs. Bentley & Son in 1889, as by 'Geilles Herring' and 'Martin Ross,' and has been out of print for several years.*

This New Edition has been largely re-written, several chapters of the original book having been omitted and replaced by new matter.

PRESS NOTICES OF THE FIRST EDITION.

SPECTATOR.—"If anyone wishes to get a true picture of the realities and amenities of Irish country life, he cannot do better than seek instruction from this admirable novel."

WORLD.—"A perfectly simple, natural story, brimming over with fun, and self-evident, both to those acquainted and to those unacquainted with the life described, as an unexaggerated and delightful picture."

OBSERVER.—"An Irish Cousin" is quite one of the best Irish novels of the generation. . . . As a picture of ramshackle Irish provincial society "An Irish Cousin" is inimitable. . . . A charming and brilliant novel."

STANDARD.—"The interior of a modern Irish squire's house has seldom been drawn with such skill, and never since Miss Edgeworth's time with such absolute faithfulness and want of exaggeration as Durrus, the home of the Sarsfields. . . . Mrs. Jackson-Croly's "At Home" and the run with the Moycullen hounds are as good as anything that ever Charles Lever did at his best."

With 10 Illustrations by E. OE. SOMERVILLE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

ALL ON THE IRISH SHORE

SPECTATOR.—"The paramount duty of a reviewer in dealing with this happily-named volume is one of extreme simplicity—namely, to advise anyone who loves wit, humour, horses, and Ireland, to procure it without delay."

TWENTY-FIFTH THOUSAND.

With 31 Illustrations by E. OE. SOMERVILLE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M.

Mr. STEPHEN GWYNN in the 'CORNHILL MAGAZINE.'

"There are few greater attractions than that of open healthy laughter of the contagious sort; and it would be black ingratitude not to pay tribute to the authors of "Some Experiences of an Irish R.M."—a book that no decorous person can read with comfort in a railway carriage."

THE REAL CHARLOTTE.

NEW AND CHEAPER IMPRESSION.

Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

THE SILVER FOX.

RE-ISSUE.

Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.
New York, and Bombay.

es
ok

es
'
f-
as

ne
is

n
d
t
es

E
y-
t,

s
e
a



LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1903.

*Nature's Comedian.*¹

BY W. E. NORRIS.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUGGESTIONS OF JOSEPHINE.

THE three days which followed that of his dinner at Dunville Manor were long and dismal ones for Harold. There was absolutely nothing to do at the Rectory, nor had he any temptation to walk over to Beechwood Hall; for Lilian—as she had considerably found means of letting him know—had been called away to the other side of the county by a sudden invitation from friends who had a cricket party, which was to wind up with a dance. Even Dick, who had once been a great cricketer and was still no mean performer for his years, had been persuaded to join this gathering; so that Anne's rather caustic conversation was deprived of the usual mitigating influence which made for peace. On the third day, however, Dick, being disqualified alike by his profession and his mourning from attending dances, returned, and on the morning of the fourth Harold borrowed his brother's horse and trap, with the intention of paying his respects to a lady who, he hoped, had missed him as much as he had missed her.

He was in the act of setting forth when a note, which had just arrived from Dunville Manor, was delivered to him. It was written in a big, sprawling, semi-masculine hand, and it conveyed Miss Gardiner's wish that, if he had nothing better to do, he would

¹ Copyright, 1903, by Longmans, Green, & Co.

come up to luncheon. 'Nobody but ourselves, and if that means my mother and the dogs and me, it's about all it does mean. The last lot of stayers have left and the next batch doesn't arrive till to-morrow; so please take pity on us. I have all sorts of things to say to you which I had no opportunity of saying the other night. Verbal answer will do.'

It took Harold a minute, but no more, to decide upon despatching a verbal acceptance by the bearer. After all, he could see Lilian when he pleased, and it seemed a pity that Miss Gardiner should be denied the chance of saying anything to him that she might want to say. Moreover, he felt some curiosity to hear what she wanted to say.

His curiosity was not gratified when she received him in the great, cool saloon where her mother was also seated. Lady Gardiner, who had evidently been indulging in a nap, and who had two dogs upon her knees, begged to be excused for not rising. Nothing, she said, exasperated Timothy so much as being abruptly disturbed, and he was apt, when disturbed, to take vengeance upon the legs of intruders. 'I can put him down quite safely as soon as the gong goes, for he understands as well as possible what that means; but as for going upstairs and washing one's hands, he hasn't the patience to allow it. So perhaps you will let me sit down unwashed.'

Harold intimated that she had his full permission to perform or omit any preliminary ceremony. Miss Gardiner, without requesting his permission, returned to the writing-table from which she had got up on his entrance and resumed her occupation of dashing off hurried letters. He watched her, while her mother somnolently conversed, and wondered whether that sort of behaviour was a *pose* or not. Afterwards, when he came to know her better, he realised that it was not, and that, if her manners were bad, this was simply because she belonged so completely and unaffectedly to a generation which has no manners at all. She probably forgot that he was in the room until the sound of the gong, desired by Lady Gardiner and Timothy, recalled her to actualities. Then she jumped up, remarking to her guest:

'What a welcome change it must be to you to get your meals regularly again! Ordinarily, I suppose, you feed at the most eccentric hours.'

'Well, at hours which you would call eccentric,' Harold answered; 'but I don't know that it matters much. One can accustom oneself to anything.'

'Oh, of course; only there are certain things which must always seem abnormal to you, I should think. You can't, surely, feel it to be natural that we should be living in this house, and that you, in the character of an actor on a holiday, should be entertained by us.'

'I don't know whether it is unnatural or not; it is very pleasant,' Harold politely declared.

He found it so. The delicacies provided for him were really delicacies, and he knew enough about the culinary art to recognise their excellence, while he did not as yet know quite enough about Miss Gardiner to place her. He saw, to be sure, that she was bent upon spurring his interest in her; but, so far as that went, she did not differ from fifty other ladies. Her individuality was still to seek, and he suspected her of intentionally concealing it, although she appeared to say just what came into her head.

'I have been going in for photography lately,' she informed him as soon as luncheon was over. 'It is a great nuisance to my friends and rather a nuisance to myself; but until it finally palls it will have to be endured. Come out into the garden and be victimised.'

Lady Gardiner and the dogs were invited to do likewise. There was a tent on the lawn to which they were conducted, and in front of which they were made to group themselves. Then the monkey was sent for, as well as an ear-splitting cockatoo, and a melancholy stork, upon whom the dogs were with difficulty restrained from falling. Many failures and a few successes ensued; it all took a long time; Miss Gardiner skipped about in the sunshine with her camera, while her subjects meekly endeavoured to obey her instructions. Apparently she enjoyed that method of spending the afternoon, and Harold began to wonder when she was going to say the things to him which she had professed herself eager to say. At length Lady Gardiner announced that she had had enough of sitting for her portrait for one day.

'I have got to pay calls upon various natives,' she remarked, 'and the carriage must have been at the door for more than half an hour. I daresay you will both forgive me for leaving you.'

As to their willingness to do that there could be small room for doubt; but Harold, after the old lady's leisurely retreat, felt bound to say:

'The question is whether you will forgive me for not having

left. I ought to have made myself scarce long ago, ought I not ?'

'Why,' asked Miss Gardiner, who was putting her camera back into its case, 'do you ask such senseless questions? You know perfectly well—because I told you—that you came here to have a talk with me, not to be photographed, and if you have been kept waiting, so have I. Not that my mother is much given to interrupting; only it is always more comfortable to be sure that one has a sufficiency of time and space for one's purpose. You aren't in a hurry, I hope?'

'I am in no hurry to go away,' he answered; 'I am in rather a hurry to be talked to—although I believe I can guess what you are about to say. I have had the honour to interest you in my professional capacity, and you wish me to tell you how it is done. I have been asked that question a good many times, first and last; but unfortunately I can't reply, because I don't know.'

'Oh, dear me! what a bad shot! I am neither so silly nor so inquisitive as you think. Besides, I am by no means sure that I admire you in your professional capacity. Your recitation, of course, was perfect; but you gave me to understand at the time that it was more or less of a fluke, and I can well believe that it was. What I should like to discover, if I could, is whether you are discontented or not. I hope you are, and I know you ought to be.'

'Why ought I to be?' Harold asked.

'Because,' answered Miss Gardiner, who had now conducted him into the tent and was reclining in a low chair at his elbow, 'you have great abilities—some obvious, others held in reserve for the present. Also because it does not accord with the fitness of things that a man of your pedigree and education should devote his whole future to the stage.'

'But I thought you were a Radical,' said Harold, who had certainly gathered as much from Miss Gardiner's remarks to one of her recent distinguished visitors.

'So I am, politically; but that doesn't imply that I believe in the social equality of all human beings, and I doubt whether anybody seriously holds such a ridiculous creed. Honestly, now—don't you feel that circumstances have been rather unkind to you, and that you are not quite in your proper place?'

Harold shook his head. 'I can't see why the pursuit of any art should be considered derogatory,' he declared; 'it never has been considered so, except perhaps by snobs. Painters, sculptors,

authors, musical composers—isn't it admitted that all these, provided that they are sufficiently eminent, rank with gentlemen ?'

'I hardly think it is, unless they happen to be gentlemen by birth, as of course they may be. But actors are different.'

'Why is the unhappy actor to be banned ?'

She shrugged her shoulders. 'A man who is liable at any moment to be hissed and hooted off the stage?—a man who plasters his face with grease and paint and capers before the public? But we won't waste time in arguing the question; for you know as well as I do that, although it is the fashion just now to make much of certain actors and actresses, nobody really looks upon them as belonging to the class to which you and I belong.'

'Well, what then? Suppose I don't care?'

'I should be so horribly disappointed in you if you didn't care! But I am almost sure you do. I am almost sure that you are ambitious, and I can't think that your ambition would be satisfied even if you were to become the most famous actor in England.'

Harold, on the contrary, was quite inclined to think that it would; yet he listened—at first with amusement, then with an increasing sense of satisfaction—to Miss Gardiner's description of what his ambitions would be were he what her fancy painted him. From this it appeared that, as the scion of an ancient and dispossessed family, he must above all things desire to restore the fallen fortunes of the race, to be once more Dunville of Dunville Manor, to make a name for himself which should not be unworthy of his illustrious origin. And he must be aware that he had the requisite capacity, given a field for its exercise; he could not but recognise that such successes as he had already achieved, however legitimate and creditable in themselves, were quite useless as a means towards his end. He must, therefore, be discontented with his actual circumstances, despite the outward courage and serenity with which he accepted them. As a likeness of Harold Dunville, this scarcely reached the level of the negatives which had just been taken in such profusion; but it was at least a rather attractive picture, and nobody objects to be pleasingly portrayed. Harold not only liked it, but found himself—as it was his custom and nature to do—involuntarily adopting the part assigned to him while his neighbour talked. She talked very well, too, and with a perceptible enthusiasm which was at once flattering and infectious.

'Only you seem to have forgotten one thing,' he remarked, when she paused; 'I don't happen to be the head of my family.'

'Oh, your brother doesn't count,' she returned; 'he virtually puts himself out of it by being a parson.'

'Does he? Well, then, there is another thing. This place is let to tenants who, from what I can hear, are not unlikely to become purchasers.'

'We scarcely count either. I doubt whether my father will buy the place, and even if he should—— However, these are mere details; the essential point is that you should really wish to recover what you have lost. And my conviction is that you do.'

Upon what evidence had she arrived at such a conviction? He could not imagine; yet, oddly enough, he shared it. He confessed—and indeed this was true—that the thought of the home of his childhood being in the occupation of strangers had often pained him; he owned that he was sometimes disgusted by the unavoidable limitations and humiliations of a stage career; he professed, with all the pathos that the occasion demanded and even a little more, deep contrition for the juvenile excesses which had finally resulted in his being what he was.

'But,' he pertinently asked, in conclusion, 'in what way can a man of my age and my small opportunities make a fresh departure?'

She surprised him by replying, without a moment's hesitation: 'There is only one way: you must get into Parliament.'

'Never before,' Harold answered, laughing, 'have I heard that recommended as a method of making money. On the other hand, I know that it is impossible to get into Parliament without spending money; and I am a pauper.'

'Surely you must have saved something!'

'Well, a few thousands.'

'A few thousands would suffice. And I think you are mistaken in supposing that political life doesn't lead to fortune. Very often it does. Of course I am not speaking of the average M.P., who is a mere lay figure, but of men like yourself, who have the gift of eloquence and can force their way to the front if they choose. Moreover, money is not everything.'

'Isn't it the main thing?'

'Certainly not; distinction is the main thing, and distinction is what I want you to secure. The rest will follow.'

'I can't think in what way.'

'Oh, well, you will see. Practically, it always does follow through one channel or another, and nothing venture nothing have. Now, I happen to know—but this is strictly private—that the representation of the division in which we live will soon be vacant. Poor Mr. Pemberton, who is almost hopelessly ill, must resign his seat before long, and you, as a local man, ought to have a very good chance of succeeding him. Particularly as you would be backed by my father's influence, which may not amount to much locally, but is powerful at headquarters. When once you have been returned as member for the division you will have got your foot firmly upon the first rung of the ladder which will lead up to—well, to all manner of fine things, I hope.'

'You take my breath away!' exclaimed Harold.

'Yes; I thought very likely I should. But you will get it back again presently—to-morrow or the day after, shall we say?—and then perhaps you will let me know whether or not we are to enter into an alliance which I trust that you will never have reason to regret, if you decide to conclude it. You see, it just comes to this: the stage will never do, whereas public life may do, and, with your talents, probably will. There is the risk of failure, I grant you; but since the world began nothing great has ever been accomplished by people who shrank from that risk.'

She continued in the same strain for some little time longer, and he fell in with her mood, partly because he was genuinely influenced by it, partly because his temperament forbade him to decline a becoming *rôle*. It was scarcely possible for him to close his eyes to what he was really being offered, nor could Miss Gardiner very well have avowed her personal desires with greater frankness. Such, at all events, was his conclusion, as he walked homewards, and he dallied for a while, not unappreciatively, with the idea of espousing Sir Joseph's heiress. In that way, no doubt, a Dunville might once more come into his own. For the rest, her notions were fantastic enough, and she was so evidently capricious that they were as likely as not to prove evanescent. Then, too, there was Lilian.

'Oh, I shan't do it,' he said to himself at length; 'of course I shan't dream of doing it. I daresay I should have dreamt of doing it, though, if I had come across her a few months ago; for it all sounds rather nice.'

Anne, when he reached the Rectory grounds, had something to tell him which did not sound at all nice. He encountered her

in the orchard, which he was traversing on his way to the house, and she said :

'You have missed a visit from Lilian Ormond by paying such an unconscionably long one to the Gardiners. She and Dick went away together on their bicycles about half an hour ago.'

She had the satisfaction of seeing Harold's face fall ; but he did not give her that of hearing him express verbal disappointment. His only remark was :

'Unfortunately, one can't be in two places at the same time, and I was detained longer than I had expected.'

'By Lady Gardiner ?'

'No ; my departure would never leave the old lady inconsolable, I am afraid. It was Miss Gardiner who first wanted to take my photograph and then to tell my fortune.'

'Oho !' said Anne, pricking up her ears ; 'so Josephine wanted to tell your fortune, did she ? Through examination of the palm of your hand or through intuitive perception ?'

'Of course she didn't examine my hand. That game has been out of fashion for a great many years, and Miss Gardiner is not the sort of person to take up discarded fashions. She only wished to convince me—and pretty nearly succeeded in convincing me—that I am thrown away upon the stage. After all, it *is* in some ways an undignified calling and one might do better for oneself in other directions. What do you think ?'

He was honestly desirous of hearing what a sensible person like Anne thought, and he was only a little disconcerted by the promptitude and candour of her reply.

'No doubt,' said she, 'you would do a great deal better for yourself in a worldly sense by marrying Josephine Gardiner, if that is what you and she mean. And, taking all the circumstances into consideration, you can't very well mean anything else. Don't count upon her, though ; don't drop the bone that you have in your mouth before you are sure of being able to snap up a bigger one. It is disinterested of me to give you this advice, because nothing would please me more personally than to see you making love to Josephine. In fact, I would gladly see you making love to anybody who wasn't Lilian Ormond.'

'I wonder why !'

'You wouldn't wonder if you had eyes in your head and intelligence enough to use them. I don't suppose there is much use in my telling you ; but perhaps there isn't any great harm either. It is a question between you and Dick, that's all.'

'You don't mean that!'

'I always mean what I say. And, although you are unlikely to believe me, she is really not very far from being in love with Dick—or was not before you came and put your oar in. Unquestionably she is very fond of him.'

'I should be surprised if she were not,' Harold generously declared.

'And even more surprised if she were to accept him, I daresay. Well, she won't do that this afternoon, for the good reason that she won't be asked; but I hope poor Dick is having a pleasant time. Now, I know very well that there is no surer way of making a pig turn to the left than shooing him off towards the right; but, for all that, I can't help waving my elderly arms and stamping my ancient feet behind you. Especially now that you are provided with such a splendid counter-attraction. Dick is too chivalrous to say a word and too much of a gentleman to bear malice, happen what may. Don't you think that you might imitate his chivalry to the extent of remembering that he was first in the field and that he at least is in earnest?'

Harold was spared the necessity of reply to an appeal so direct and so extremely embarrassing by the entrance of his elder brother in person, and this interruption was the more welcome to him because he really could not regard Dick in the light of an imaginable rival. Dick was at the moment unbecomingly hot; also he looked every year of his age; also he wanted his tea, and devoured buttered toast, when it was brought to him, in a most unromantic fashion. Oh, no! the whole thing must be a delusion of Anne's, born of a desire on her part that matters should arrange themselves as she wanted them to do. Nevertheless, it was distinctly alarming to be requested, after a time, to accompany Dick into his study.

'Could you spare me half an hour?' the latter asked, with some hesitation and diffidence. 'I want, if you don't mind, to talk to you about something in private.'

So it was coming, after all! Harold jumped up, with apparent alacrity, but with a sinking heart and a resentful feeling that his hand was being forced. It would be so easy to drive him into a corner, to make him say plainly whether he meant business or not. And he was, for various reasons, so very disinclined to commit himself to a definite statement upon the subject! One thing, however, was certain: he could not now decline to be interrogated.

CHAPTER VIII.

DREAMS AND DOUBTS.

WHEN the two brothers had seated themselves in the little dark study which had been the scene of more mental activity than one of them suspected, the elder filled and lighted his pipe, while the younger drew a cigarette out of a resplendent gold case, adorned with a monogram in brilliants—the gift of Miss Lorna Fitzwalter.

‘I am afraid,’ Dick began, with an embarrassed laugh, ‘that I am going to make you think me rather a fool; but that can’t be helped. There are things which have got to be confessed sooner or later, I take it, whatever the consequences may be.’

A grunt, which partook of the nature of a groan, signified resigned acquiescence on Harold’s part. His personal opinion was that it is always easy and generally wise to refrain from confessions; but of course there is no stopping people who are bent upon disburdening their souls.

‘I suppose,’ Dick went on meditatively, ‘that we must be a good deal alike in some ways, you and I. Your abilities, no doubt, are superior to mine; still there may be—there appears to be—something in the blood which causes us to have the same tendencies, the same inclinations, the same overpowering cravings. For my own part, anyhow, I may say that I have been more or less conscious of this all my life.’

All his life! Well, he certainly could not have been conscious of being in love with Lilian Ormond before she was born, and Harold was unable to recall earlier instances of their having set their affections on a common object. He said, in accents of mild remonstrance, ‘Isn’t that rather fanciful?’

‘Possibly,’ answered Dick, ‘and indeed I don’t know that there has ever been an actor or an actress or a dramatic author in our family. All I do know is that the theatre has always had an extraordinary attraction for me, and that I have always felt—quite mistakenly, I daresay—that I could write a passable play if I tried.’

Harold was so relieved that he could not help ejaculating, ‘Oh! is that all?’

‘No, that isn’t all; I have actually done it! I have written the play; about which I want you to give me your honest

opinion. I have read it and written it too often to have any opinion of my own, and it has been locked up in one of my drawers for the last two years. Of course, while dear mother lived, I couldn't horrify her—as I assuredly should have done—by producing it; but now I feel free. For, although it is not usual for the clergy to write plays, I see no moral objection in the world to their doing so, and indeed, as far as that goes, my name need not appear upon the play-bill.'

Harold contrived to keep his face straight, notwithstanding a sudden spasm of inward laughter, which was provoked by various causes. Only to one of these did he give expression when he mildly remarked: 'It is a longish step from writing a play to printing a play-bill, you know.'

'Oh, the thing may be worthless and hopeless; I shall not be in the least surprised if you tell me that it is,' Dick answered. 'I won't deny that I shall be disappointed; for I want money, and successful pieces are lucrative, I believe.'

'Very lucrative indeed. A man of my acquaintance has lately made over thirty thousand pounds by a play—and a rather poor play too.'

'Is it possible? And does that happen often?'

'No; but there are dramatists who have done even better with a single production, and from five to ten thousand pounds is no very out-of-the-way profit to make. However, the whole business is a lottery; the most experienced judges can't tell beforehand what will hit the target of public favour or what will miss it. The great difficulty in the way of beginners is that managers are so shy of experiments. They would much rather bring out a bad play by an old hand than one which looks as if it might be a good play by a novice. As for me, I can't pretend to be an experienced judge, and I have no more influence with managers than you have.'

These well-meant admonitory remarks did not appear to have much discouraging effect upon Dick, who in truth was only listening to them with one ear.

'Thirty thousand pounds!' he murmured. 'Why, at that rate one might be a rich man in no time!'

'It takes a little time to collect the money,' said Harold, smiling. 'I thought you were rather by way of despising wealth, Dick; why are you in such a desperate hurry to become rich?'

Dick did not make the reply which the other's half-jealous

suspicion had anticipated ; but the reply that he did make was of a nature to excite a different order of jealousy. He strode up and down the room, with his hands under his coat-tails, while he jerked out alternate clouds of smoke and apologetic sentences.

'Oh, well, one has dreams ; I suppose everybody has dreams. Foolish, perhaps ; but innocent, I hope. When I succeeded to the property there was obviously only one thing to be done, and I did it. At the same time, it was a wrench. Naturally, I don't much like to see strangers in the old place ; I daresay you don't like it yourself.'

'Not much.'

'And perhaps we should both dislike even more to see them owners instead of tenants ; although, if Sir Joseph offered a good price it might be almost a matter of duty to accept it.'

'How a matter of duty ?' Harold asked quickly. 'In the sense that you may have a wife and family to provide for before long, do you mean ?'

Dick's clear eyes met his brother's questioning look with one which seemed to be also partially interrogative, but which had not the faintest trace of reproach.

'I don't think that contingency is particularly likely to arise,' he answered ; 'but, as practical men, we had better take it into account. Well, then, as I say, I have had my dreams. Not indeed of being able to live at the Manor again—which even such sums as you mention would scarcely put it in my power to do—but at least of keeping what remains of the estate in the family.'

'I think that, if by any possible means it can be kept in the family, it ought to be kept,' said Harold gravely and decidedly.

He was for the moment quite gravely, quite decidedly of that opinion. If he was not in reality what Josephine Gardiner took him for, she had succeeded in making him believe that he was—had succeeded also in convincing him that, as she said, the stage would 'never do.' To retain the old home for the old family was an ambition so noble and becoming that he could not refuse himself the credit of cherishing it, even though he perceived that it might demand some heavy sacrifices ; but that the object in view should be achieved by Dick, with his fantastic notions of making a fortune by play-writing, was as little imaginable as it was desirable. Presently, as his brother did not speak, he resumed :

'I, too, have sometimes permitted myself to dream. It wasn't

I who wrecked our fortunes; still I certainly gave them a kick on the downward path, and if I should ever be able to get the Manor back, it would be a species of atonement on my part, wouldn't it?'

'You would have to make a large sum of money,' remarked Dick dubiously. 'Do you think it could be done out of your earnings as an actor or a manager?'

'It might; one never knows. And other ways of making money are not inconceivable. However, there isn't much use in talking about dreams until one has taken a step or two towards converting them into matters of fact.'

'Meanwhile, you'll read my humble bid for fortune in the capacity of a playwright?'

Of course he would do that, Harold promised, adding, as a kindly forewarning of probable disappointment, that a man might be an extremely clever fellow, and even an admirable writer, without possessing the peculiar dramatic instinct. In truth, nothing seemed to him less likely than that his brother had that instinct, and he felt but a very faint curiosity to peruse the neatly written manuscript which was now handed to him.

Before midnight, however, he was wonderingly compelled to alter his opinion of Dick's capacity. Retiring, as usual, at a comparatively early hour, and not feeling sleepy when he reached his bedroom, he thought he would just take a look at what was tolerably certain to prove an impossible piece, and, after perusing a few pages, he had to recognise that it did not promise to be at all impossible. At the end of the first act he exclaimed aloud, 'But, hang it all, you know, this is devilish good!' In the second and third acts the interest grew, culminating, as always ought to be and so seldom is the case, in the fourth; so that, when Harold at length laid down the manuscript, he was fain to mutter:

'The only question is whether the thing isn't *too* good! The only question is whether there is a single actor in this country who could play the principal part without spoiling it.'

Perhaps there was one; but that one, unfortunately, was thinking of abandoning the stage in favour of political life and other contingent avocations. He stretched out his arms and legs, laughed, and mused: 'Well, there's Moore. He wouldn't do it anything like as convincingly as I should, for he would never realise all that there is to be done with it. Still, I daresay he would score a success, and it's essentially a one-part piece, which

is what he prefers. Lord ! how I shall hate giving it up to him ! One must needs give up something, though, if one wants to secure something better.'

This profound philosophical reflection gave rise to others, which kept him out of his bed for the best part of an hour. He was proposing to surrender, or, at all events, contemplating the surrender of, more than a stage triumph, and it seemed very doubtful indeed whether he was not about to lay up a lifelong regret for himself. Had he been younger, he would have felt no doubt at all upon the subject ; but experience had inevitably taught him self-knowledge, and, although he wanted to believe that he would always love Lilian Ormond, he could not but be aware that it would be a sheer miracle if he should. On the other hand, his highly precarious and imaginative scheme might come to nothing, while there was a very fair probability of Dick's play bringing its author a pot of money. Not enough, to be sure, for the redemption of the property ; yet enough, perhaps, to warrant an offer of marriage which, according to Anne, was by no means sure to be declined.

'Oh, I couldn't stand that !' he cried.

The disinterested Anne had recommended him not to drop the bone that he had already in his mouth, and her words, with a somewhat different application from that which she had intended them to bear, remained surely words of wisdom. 'All for love, and the world well lost !' Harold ejaculated. Not that there was any question of losing the world—only of relinquishing a vague and rather fantastic vision. So before he went to sleep he ungallantly commended Miss Josephine Gardiner and the House of Commons to the deuce.

There can be no need to add that he went over to Beechwood the next day ; nor was he disappointed of the private conversation with Lilian for which he was impatient. Her brothers, together with sundry scions of neighbouring families who were at home for the holidays or the Long Vacation, were engaged upon a cricket-match in the park, at which the pair looked on for a time ; then they strolled off to the adjoining woods, and Harold was enabled to mention, with a hint of reproach in his voice, how desperately dreary existence during the past few days had been rendered for him by his companion's absence.

'In spite of Lady Gardiner and Josephine ?' asked the girl, laughing. 'I really can't believe that you found their company dreary. Anyhow, you seem to have liked it well enough to spend

the whole of yesterday afternoon with them, instead of coming home to tea with your sister and me.'

'How was I to know that you were coming to tea? I tore my hair when I heard that you had been and gone. As for the Gardiners, I couldn't very well refuse their invitation. That is the worst of being in the country, where everybody knows whether it is possible for one to be engaged or not.'

'All the same, I doubt whether you would have accepted if you hadn't wanted to accept. But why shouldn't you want to cultivate Josephine's acquaintance? It would be strange if you were not interested in her, for nobody can deny that she is an interesting person.'

'I suppose she is. Rather odd, rather clever—oh, yes, as far as that goes, I daresay I should have been interested in her talk if I hadn't wanted so much to be somewhere else all the time.'

Lilian laughed again, and remarked: 'If Josephine could hear you, she would hardly believe her ears. I should think it must be a rule almost without an exception that people who are with her never want to be anywhere else.'

Evidently she was not jealous of Miss Gardiner, and he scarcely knew whether to be pleased or not by her immunity from a very comprehensible weakness. Either she felt sure of him or she cared less about him than he had fondly imagined: which was it? In any case, it was not so much with regard to Josephine as to another person that he was anxious to arrive at her sentiments; so, after remaining silent for a moment, he changed the subject by remarking:

'What a good fellow that brother of mine is!'

'As good as it is possible to be,' Lilian cordially agreed. 'But have you only just made that discovery?'

'Well, I am renewing it. You must remember that I have seen nothing of him for ages, and that I probably don't know him half as well as you do.'

'The more you see of him the more you will like and admire him,' Lilian confidently declared.

'Oh!—has that been your experience?'

'Yes; and I am sure that it will go on being my experience. One never gets to the end of his goodness. Of course, everybody has faults; but what his are I can't think, unless being too modest and underrating oneself is a fault. He certainly does that.'

Perhaps, thought Harold, Dick did underrate himself in more ways than one; perhaps, too, somebody who was not given to that form of folly might have fallen into the opposite error. But this hypothesis was so disagreeable to contemplate that he could not help exclaiming, with a sigh:

'How happy I should be if I could hope that you would ever speak of me in such flattering language!'

She shook her head. 'You will have to change a good deal if you are going to be like your brother. You are not the least bit like him now. But,' she made haste to add, 'I am not sure that I want you to be like him.'

'Oh, from the moment that you don't want me to resemble Dick I have no temptation to strive after the impossible.'

She turned her face towards him with an expression which could scarcely be misinterpreted. 'It isn't perfection that one expects or asks for,' said she; 'do you think so?'

'I hope it isn't,' he replied, 'for you appear to have found out that I am far from perfect, and indeed I don't set up to be.'

'No,' she returned, smiling, 'I know you don't, and I like you all the better for that. Such as you are, I wouldn't have you altered.'

Upon this he suddenly cooled. He had ascertained what it had been his object to ascertain; he was no longer afraid of Dick, only a little of himself and his own impetuosity. One step farther upon that very thin ice and all would be over! He said to himself, as he had had to say on many previous occasions, 'For Heaven's sake, mind what you are about!' So, instead of clasping the girl whom he loved in his arms—which thing he well knew that he might do safely in one sense, however perilously in another—he began to discourse, after a somewhat vague, confused fashion, of the duties which seemed to impose themselves upon a man placed as he was. There was, for example, the chance that, by dint of some exertion on his part, a portion of the alienated family estates might be redeemed. One thought more than one talked about such things, he said; one's conduct and one's projects were liable to be influenced by them—ought to be influenced by them perhaps.

She agreed and sympathised. It was obvious that she did not understand what he was driving at, and he had neither the face nor the heart to be more explicit. Moreover, he himself recognised but uncertainly and unwillingly what his drift was. All he did know for certain was that he loved Lilian, and that he

could have wished her to count upon his devotion with just a shade less of assurance than she did.

The sudden advent of Mr. Ormond was not unwelcome to him, as relieving a situation which threatened to become complicated. Mr. Ormond, whose puckered brow and pursed-up lips denoted inward perturbation, had not come to interrupt the *tête-à-tête* in the character of a vigilant parent (for, as has been mentioned, he apparently thought that his daughter required no looking after), but because he wanted to tell somebody about a very annoying piece of news which had just reached him, and because the spectators of the cricket-match furnished a rather larger audience than he could discreetly address. He said:

‘I don’t know when in all my life I have been more vexed! It has been only too plain to us all of late that poor Pemberton was in a bad way; but I did hope that his health would have allowed him to represent the division for one more Session—which might have made all the difference. Now, however, I hear from a sure source that he has made up his mind to retire almost immediately. Of course, one can’t blame him—the doctor’s orders are imperative, I understand—still, the fact remains that he is simply making a present of the seat to the Radicals.’

‘How dreadfully unfortunate!’ exclaimed Lilian. ‘But, after all, Mr. Pemberton had a fair majority at the last election, hadn’t he? Why should we despair?’

‘Because of your infernal friends at the Manor, for one thing,’ growled her father in reply. ‘That old rascal Gardiner has been spending any amount of money in the neighbourhood, and it’s easy to guess his motives. Besides, there are other reasons which you wouldn’t understand for our being most unfavourably situated as regards the electorate at the present moment. A Conservative county, too, except in our own confounded district. Oh, we shall disgrace ourselves; you may take my word for it that we shall disgrace ourselves!’

Lilian hoped not, and was politely told for her pains that the voters were not particularly likely to be influenced by her hopes. Harold confined himself to remarking that he presumed there would be a contest.

‘Naturally there will,’ returned the old gentleman irritably. ‘You don’t suppose that we are going to let some brute of a carpet-bagger walk over, do you? But we shall be beaten, you’ll see. Ah, dear me! What a sad pity it is that the old families,

like your own, are either turned out of house and home or too poor to come forward ! We ourselves shall have to fall back upon a carpet-bagger, I fear.'

What would he have thought and said had it been revealed to him that one representative of the local old families had already been solicited to come forward in the Radical interest ? Harold, of course, made no such appalling revelation in the course of the long harangue to which he now lent a respectful ear ; yet, after taking his leave, he could not help indulging in visions which were at least seductive so long as they remained within the realm of visions. An easy victory and a rich reward ! That much seemed virtually promised to him ; and if there be no rose without a thorn, who can doubt that it is sometimes worth while to be stabbed by a thorn in order to pluck a rose ? Nevertheless, he concluded, as he had done before, by muttering, 'Oh, I shan't do it—I can't do it ! I almost wish I could, though.'

(To be continued.)

Wagers.

IN the days when ordinary gaming wagers were enforceable at common law, and as the passion for betting spread with the wider distribution of wealth, it is easy to understand that the courts of law found themselves threatened with such a number of cases of a vexatious and frivolous nature issuing therefrom that measures had to be taken to lighten the labours of the judges, as well as to uphold the dignity of the tribunals. These were necessarily, at first, partial; for so long as a wager, *quâ* wager, was not an illegal contract, it was only possible to proscribe certain forms of it, or to impose restraints in particular cases.

The sports and games which engross the leisure hours of the community to-day, all exhibiting in a greater or less degree a display of skill or strength, afford so many occasions for gaming that wagers unconnected with such pastimes, and dependent upon fortuitous events wholly beyond human control and calculation, are at the present day practically unthought of. It may be interesting, therefore, to recall cases of this latter kind which passed for sport in the estimation of some of our forefathers, and occupied the courts of law.

We may, however, first glance at some of the principles laid down by the law for the purpose of discouraging actions of a mischievous and futile nature, or limiting their scope. These were based broadly upon four considerations: as to whether the wager (1) was against public policy; (2) was against the rights or privileges of disinterested parties; (3) led to indecent evidence not necessary for the purpose of either civil or criminal justice; (4) was *contra bonos mores*.

Thus, the nature of the evidence necessary to support a plaintiff's action was, in a large measure, a test of the admissibility of his claim.

By an Act of Charles II. the first step was taken to discourage the litigation of wagers by making void securities given for money

lost at games, and any sum exceeding 100*l.*, so lost by way of stakes, irrecoverable. In the reign of Anne a statute was made whereby money lost by wager, and actually parted with, and being of the value of 10*l.* or more, was recoverable as a debt; and a security, given for money lost in betting on third parties, was void. This measure, one would have supposed, was calculated to put an end altogether to gaming for high stakes, for what wager was possible when neither of the contracting parties could win or lose? These statutes, however, only affected wagers on games. The difficulty of amending the laws to any great extent concerning wagers in general lay in distinguishing the principle involved in common gaming transactions from that in contracts of a commercial character, wherein the speculative element may be essential, but not the sole or primary purpose. Thus, A takes from B 6*l.* to 5*l.* against Oxford winning the University Boat Race. This is, of course, a common bet, depending upon an event which will be determined within twelve months; but, when stated in terms of a contract, it so much resembles a legitimate commercial agreement that it is difficult to distinguish the difference between them, for all wagers are contracts, and the essence of a contract is a consideration. Stated thus, B agrees with A that, in consideration of A giving him 5*l.*, he (B) promises to give A 11*l.* if Cambridge loses. Such a contract has, on the face of it, a family likeness to a marine insurance, whereby a company agrees with an individual that, in consideration of his paying to them a fixed sum of money, the company will pay him a larger fixed sum of money in the event of his ship being lost at sea during a fixed period. But the difference between the two cases lies in this: that A, who backs Oxford, has no property or interest in the race. The stake, if he wins, is all gain to him. The insured, on the other hand, has a property in his ship. If the ship is lost, the money he receives from the company represents the value of the vessel. He does not (necessarily) make a profit by the event; indeed, if he is only covered to the exact value of his ship, he loses to the amount of the premium he has paid. By thus making interest in the object of a contract an essential to its validity, the law at once protected *bonâ fide* business agreements and attacked those of a purely gaming character.

But there is a kind of wager which seems to comply with all the terms of the commercial contract of a life insurance. We take the liberty of borrowing an illustration of it from Sir William

Anson. That great authority on contracts thus states the case: 'A is about to commence his innings in a cricket-match, and he agrees with X that if X will promise to give him 1*l.* at the end of his innings, he will pay X a shilling for every run he (A) gets.' Here there is a valid consideration and a *bonâ fide* interest. The interest of the man who insures his life is clearly to live as long as he can, notwithstanding the yearly premium he is obliged by his agreement to pay. In the same way, though A has to pay so much for every run he makes, this drawback is outbalanced by his enjoyment of the game, his desire to distinguish himself, and so forth; and his interest is therefore to have as long an innings as possible.

It is not, however, sufficient that an interest be established to make a wager valid, for the interest may be of such a nature as to cause or incite persons to break the law, or threaten the safety of the State. A case which bears upon this point was heard at the York Assizes in 1812, and as it created considerable sensation at the time, and is now familiar only to law students, we may perhaps be allowed to recite it at some length.

The action was brought by the Reverend Robert Gilbert against Sir Mark Sykes, and arose from a bet made between the parties upon the life of Napoleon Bonaparte. Sir Mark, ten years before the action, had invited some friends to dinner, the reverend gentleman being one of the number. The bottle having passed round freely, politics became the subject of conversation, and the opinion was expressed by some of the party that Napoleon was in a critical situation at that time, and that attempts would be made to assassinate him. This view was held by the host, who said that he considered Bonaparte's life in such danger that, if anyone would give him a hundred guineas, he would pay him a guinea a day during Napoleon's lifetime. Upon this the Reverend Gilbert, 'in the language,' as the defendant's counsel put it, 'of a common five-guinea better on a racecourse, nailed him with: "Will you, Sir Mark? I'll take you—done?"' The sporting parson gave a hundred guineas to Sir Mark, who, for a considerable time, paid him various sums of money on account of the wager, amounting in all to 970*l.* Then for five or six years the guinea a day payments ceased, the baronet feeling, no doubt, that if Bonaparte was not dead he ought to be, and Gilbert (who, it may be mentioned, enjoyed a living worth some 1200*l.* a year) brought this action against Sir Mark to enforce the wager, and sought to recover from him a further 2296*l.* 7*s.* The plaintiff's counsel

contended that, although it might be objected that wagers on the life of men were immoral, yet the laws of England supported such wagers, and he cited the case of the Earl of March (afterwards Duke of Queensberry) and a Mr. Pickard (or Pigott), who made a bet between themselves as to whose father should die the first—a wager which was supported by the great lawyer Lord Mansfield. To this the defendant's counsel replied that there was nothing immoral in the case cited. The wager between those necessitous young men—March and Pickard—merely amounted to this: 'If your father dies before mine, *you* shall help *me*; if mine dies the first, *I* will help *you*.' 'But,' said this counsel, 'in the case now before us there may eventually be an interest revealed inconsistent with the public safety. The idea of invasion is now generally laughed at, but sometimes those things which are laughed at become serious realities, and putting the case that Bonaparte should, at the head of his army, succeed in effecting a descent upon this country, it is clear that the plaintiff would have an interest in protecting that life which every true subject and friend of this country would be interested in destroying; he would have an annuity of three hundred and sixty-five guineas depending upon the personal safety of this inveterate enemy of our country. I do not know,' concluded the learned gentleman, 'whether the reverend clergyman frequently attends the Church, the doctrines of which teach us to pray for our enemies, but he has a more cogent motive for being devout in this part of the service—an interest of three hundred and sixty-five guineas a year.' The judge on the occasion does not seem to have laid much stress upon the question whether this wager tended to imperil the safety of the State. He asked the jury to consider whether the bet had been seriously made; and, if it were a serious bet, whether, in all the circumstances, the plaintiff had not been paid enough money by the defendant. The jury took the hint, and gave a verdict against the rapacious parson. Outside the legal aspect of this wager, some evidence was given in the case which is curious reading at the present time. In 1812, the year this action came into court, Bonaparte was carrying on his great Russian campaign; yet, so little seems to have been known here about his movements, that it was actually necessary to call a witness to prove that the great general was living at the commencement of this action!

Wagers having a 'dangerous tendency' were common enough in Lord Mansfield's time, and before it, and were discountenanced

by the courts as being against public policy. Thus, in an action to enforce a wager where the plaintiff promised to pay to the defendant 1s. if a certain prisoner then on his trial for felony should be transported, and the defendant promised to pay the plaintiff 10l. if the man should be acquitted, the plaintiff lost his case, it being held that such a wager was void, because it tempted persons to procure false testimony against or for the prisoner, or to suborn the jury. So, too, wagers between voters at an election as to the result of the poll could not be enforced, on the ground that they incited the parties to bribe. Neither could a man who bet another that one of them would not marry within a specified time, enforce the wager, for this was an agreement to restrain marriage, and therefore was against the interests of society.

We see how, little by little, the law, bent upon discouraging mischievous and frivolous actions, restricted the scope of common gaming contracts, and differentiated them from the forms of legitimate business agreements. No argument seemed too far-fetched so long as it was directed against the common wager and not in support of it. In Gilbert and Sykes the courts were asked to believe that the safety of the State was threatened by a bet between two obscure gentlemen over their bottle on the life of Bonaparte. In another instance, an equally extravagant view of the far-reaching effects of a frivolous bet was taken by the judge. We refer to a case where one man made a bet with another that the Canterbury collection of the duties on hops in one year would amount to more than the collection in the preceding year. This wager the court held to be void, because 'it was contrary to sound policy, inasmuch as it led to a discussion which tended to expose to the world the amount of the revenue'!

Lord Holt, who tried an action arising out of a wager some two hundred years ago, did not consider it beneath the dignity of the court to inquire in that case 'whether a person playing backgammon, having stirred one of his men without moving it from the point, was bound to play it.' We suppose the learned judge was unable to settle this question, unaided, for it is recorded that 'he called in the assistance of the groom porter to decide it.'

On the other hand Lord Loughborough, nearly a hundred years later, had a finer perception of what constitutes a frivolous action, for he refused to try a case based on a wager, 'whether there are more ways than six of nicking seven on the dice, allowing seven to be the mean, and eleven a nick to seven.'

Lord Mansfield, of the same period, was sorely tried when he

had before him ludicrous actions of this kind. On one occasion he said, 'The case being here, we must now dispose of it, but whilst we are occupied with these idle disputes, parties having large debts due to them, and questions of great magnitude to try, are grievously delayed.' This case arose out of a wager made between two individuals of a *rump and dozen* as to which of the two was the elder. Having procured their baptismal certificates, the plaintiff and his friends and the friends of the defendant met at the Albion Tavern, Aldersgate Street, and it was shown that the plaintiff had won the wager. Whereupon he ordered a dinner for the party which cost 18*l.*, and brought this action, and obtained a verdict against the defendant for the money. It would appear that the defendant himself was not present on the festive occasion when the subject matter of the bet was settled beyond dispute by the baptismal certificates, and therefore found no solace for his disappointment in the joys of the *rump and dozen*. It was contended on the one hand that such a wager was not only quite harmless, but commendable, since it promoted conviviality and good humour, and was therefore for the public benefit; and, on the other, that no action could be maintained upon such a wager because of its 'uncertainty, frivolity, ludicrous nature, and immoral tendency.' One would suppose an element of uncertainty to be essential to all wagers at the moment they are contracted; whilst afterwards, the more complete the demonstration of the issue on which they turn, the better. In this particular case one of the parties was proved to be ten years older than the other: a margin of difference that precluded the possibility of quibble. Judges in those days were not quite so simple as now. Lord Mansfield, who tried this action, admitted that 'there seemed great uncertainty as to what was meant by a *rump and dozen*,' but he did not ask, 'What is a *rump and dozen*?' He was careful to say, 'I do not *judicially* know the meaning of the term,' in other words, 'A *rump and dozen* has not been defined by statute: its significance has not been placed beyond doubt by such evidence as is deemed incontrovertible to a judicial mind.' A rule obtained by the defendant to show cause why the verdict should not be set aside was discharged. The court held that there was 'nothing immoral in this wager: a *rump and dozen* was a good dinner and plenty of wine: was it impossible to sit down to a good dinner without being guilty of excess? It was very regrettable that the action was brought, but there was nothing in this wager to remove it from those that were legal.'

Beyond the efforts of the courts to discourage the litigation of wagers in the directions and on the grounds we have briefly outlined, and in addition by making void such wagers as were on their face immoral, or which might lead to indecent evidence not necessary for the decision of a civil or criminal right, and in matters in which the parties had only a self-created interest, the courts discountenanced all contracts tending *contra bonos mores*. An action arising out of a wager of this kind based upon the sex of the Chevalier d'Eon came before Lord Mansfield about a hundred and thirty years ago. The wager was held by him to be illegal, because it tended 'to violate the peace of society by exhibiting a third person, who was innocent, in a ridiculous light to all the world, and to break in upon his comfort and peace of mind.'

'This case,' said the learned judge, 'made a great noise all over Europe.' It was notorious that there were very many wagers on this issue at that time in this country. M. Michaud speaks of 'les discussions, et les paris énormes qui venaient d'avoir lieu à Londres sur son sexe,' the sex of the Chevalier d'Eon, who is chiefly remembered here by the controversy which these wagers occasioned, or rather, we may say, which gave them birth. After a brilliant career as soldier and the political agent and the confidential friend of Louis XV., that remarkable and mysterious individual, Eon de Beaumont, who, by the order of his royal master and for purposes which no one is ever likely to fathom, dressed for a great part of his life as a woman, lived as an exile in this country for fourteen years. The action on the wager referred to was brought in 1778—more than thirty years before his death, when there was no decisive evidence as to the Chevalier's sex, although the counsel who supported the wager alleged that '*She* had furnished the evidence *herself* in her dispute with Demorand : *she* had imposed upon the world and therefore ought not to be protected in continuing the cheat.' There has long been no room for doubt that the Chevalier d'Eon was a *man*. He died in London in 1810, and his sex was certified to by Dr. Thomas Copeland, of Golden Square, who attended him in his last moments.

Happily at the present day common sporting wagers, of which we have given some instances in the past, are simply debts of honour, but as such are perhaps as well protected as when they were enforceable at common law ; for it has been remarked with truth that there are many who will pay a debt of honour who

will try to repudiate an obligation that may be legally enforced. Happily, too, wager-layers, confronted with statutes bristling with unfriendly designs towards every form of gaming, and the pronounced feeling of the courts that the interpretation of these laws should be so stretched as to apply as far as possible to all agreements of a mischievous or frivolous tendency, are not likely often to air their grievances now at the public expense, on the ground that their claims come within the scope of legitimate commercial contracts. All wagers *per se* may to-day be void, but so long as such agreements are entered into, even though they be void at law, the judges will be called upon to consider collateral transactions arising therefrom, wherein the interests of individuals other than the parties contracting the wager may equitably demand the protection of the law. That this is true, and must be true, of a very large number of contracts in a complex society whose parts are related together by a great variety of interests, and are interdependent one on the other, is evidenced by the repealing of Sir John Barnard's Act (1734) which dealt with 'the infamous practice of stock-jobbing,' since it interfered with legitimate financial transactions. So, too, the statutes of Charles II. and of Anne, so far as they made void securities for money lost in gaming, or advanced for such purpose, were repealed because they unjustly affected innocent persons who had acquired such securities indirectly for value given. And, again, it was found necessary to modify the Gaming Act of the last reign which made wagers of every kind void, for the reason that such a comprehensive measure overlapped, so to speak, and interfered with the legitimate working of social contracts wherein the economic relations of the parties are governed by well-defined and established rules.

D. H. WILSON.

Last Year.

LAST year I first began to rhyme,
 Forswore tobacco, gave up beer.
 I was in love for the first time
 Last year.

It seems so short a time ago.
 Can spring indeed again be near?
 It made a far more gallant show
 Last year.

For Cynthia there I gathered May,
 We listened to the cuckoo here,
 And in the lanes we lost our way
 Last year.

And yonder, where the larches spread
 Their boughs, the nightingale sang clear—
 Has she forgotten all she said
 Last year?

My Cynthia smiled, and summer shone;
 She pouted, and grew still more dear;
 Her frown was sweet to look upon
 Last year.

How fair she was, sometimes how kind!
 How racked my heart 'twixt hope and fear!
 Ah, *now* I see that I was blind
 Last year.

For soon she grew a little tired,
 The reason did not quite appear.
 I ceased to be what she required
 Last year.

Ah, well, the worst in time will pass,
 And *Lilian's* eyes are blue and clear.
 Perhaps—I may have been an ass
 Last year.

A. C. S.

A Michaelmas Move.

FARMER PRESTON walked down the muddy little lane which led to his marshes, his head bowed in deep thought. He did not pick his way, but splashed through the slush and pools of water, leaning heavily on his thick ash stick. At the end of the lane he undid a gate and turned across the marsh in the direction of the big black drainage-mill, stopping from time to time to look at the horses and colts which were quietly cropping the grass. Then, taking off his hat, he rattled the head of his stick inside it, making the animals start off in a mad scamper to the far side of the marsh, where they halted all together, heads erect, front feet pawing the ground, snorting defiance, ere they galloped off again, throwing up large clods of turf as they wheeled round and rushed past the farmer.

"Yer a lot o' beauties," he muttered as he walked across the plank which bridged the dike, out of which the mill was pumping water. A stiff breeze was blowing, and the sails of the mill cut through the air with a musical hum, creaking and groaning as the wind, which came in sudden gusts, caused the pace to increase. The big wheel at the side of the mill was going plug, plug, plug, plug, as it threw into the river gallons of green water, which foamed and hissed as it poured forth. The mill had been pumping since early morning, and the dike which fed it was nearly empty and was now giving off that fresh scent of weeds which so closely resembles the smell of cucumber and newly caught fish. As Farmer Preston approached the mill, a man, somewhat past middle age, came out of the door.

'Gude arternoon, sir,' he remarked. 'Yer ha' been alooken' at th' colts; lor, how they be adoin'; sound every one on 'em, and as nice a lot as yer could come across here, or in any parish for miles round. And th' owd hosses, they ha' done pretty tid'ly since harvest, gotten' right fat; yer'll ha' a rare sale, sir.'

'Aye, Nockolds, they bain't doin' so badly, still they bain't fat

enow for my liking. Can't have 'em tew fat for a Michaelmas sale. I shall take 'em up inter stalls this week and shove some corn inter 'em.'

'Well, sir, I calls 'em a proper lot; all I know is we shan't ha' sich a lot o' hosses on th' farm come next Michaelmas, 'tain't so likely; th' new tenant 'on't keep th' class o' mare like yer ha' done ter get th' foals out on. I shall miss 'em, sir; I often cast my eyes over th' beauties when I ha' got a few minutes ter spare and my mill be a runnen' same as she be now. I ha' often helped one o' th' foals out o' deke when they ha' blundered in. Yer'd ha' lost sev'ral, sir, if my mill hadn't been so gain for me ter keep an eye on 'em. But, there,' the man went on, changing his tone to one of sadness, 'everything'll be different when yer gone. Whatever can th' landlord be athinken' on, letten' yer give up cos o' spenden' a bit o' money on repairs, I can't fare ter think. That be past my understanden', that be.'

Farmer Preston smiled sadly.

'There'll be a lot o' changes, Nockolds, daresay,' he said.

'Well, all I hopes be that th' new master 'on't interfere along o' me, and my trawshen'¹ engine, and my mill,' went on Nockolds. 'She's a engine as ain't goin' ter be messed up with a lot o' strange hands; as long as he let me ha' my reg'lar crew she'll go all right. She hain't had narthen' laid out on her since she had a new fire-box eight year ago, 'cept th' cost o' a bit o' paint which I ha' daubed on her. Shouldn't like ter see her get inter strange hands. Still, I hain't got no cause ter fret, cos there bain't no one on this here farm as can work her; don't s'pose as how he'll bring one along o' him?'

Farmer Preston was visibly embarrassed. He kept digging his ash stick into the soft ground as he listened to Nockolds' conversation, making little holes in the turf, which filled with water as he pulled the stick out with a jerk.

'S'pose I shall ha' ter do yer trawshen?' the man continued. 'That'll be th' last o' yer and yars,' and his eyes filled with tears.

'Well,' replied Preston, 'that's what I comed down ter see yer about. I happened with Mr. Mackenzie on Norwich Hill a day or tew ago, and I spoke for yer.'

'Thank ye kindly, sir,' and Nockolds touched his hat. 'Knowed yer'd make that all right for me. I'll look arter yar corn for yer, sir; I 'on't trawsh if they wants straw ever so bad 'less I gets word from yer that I ha' got ter knock it out.'

'Hold yer hard and just listen ter what I ha' ter say,' interrupted the farmer. 'Let me see, I wor sayen' as how I spoke for yer. Well, Mr. Mackenzie, he say ter me as how he bain't goin' ter dew his own trawshen', leastways he ain't goin' ter keep a engine, so he says he shan't require yar sarvices. I be wery, wery sorry, Nockolds,' and Preston paused as he noted the look of blank astonishment which spread over the engineman's face. 'I spoke up for yer, I did.'

'Spoke up for me, did yer? Well, I ha' been engineman along o' yer for nigh on twenty year and never robbed yer of an oat, and yer spoke up for me! Daresay, but yer must *make* him ha' me,' said the man defiantly.

'That's more nor I can dew, Nockolds, and yer knows it.'

'Blast me, if he ain't goin' ter dew his trawshen' how be he agoen' on about th' grinden'?''

'Don't think he be goin' ter grind much. Yer see, Nockolds, he ain't goen' ter keep th' stock or th' hosses I ha' done, leastways that's what I gather. I s'pose when he ha' a trawsh he'll arrange ter cut enow chaff ter last him for a time and dew th' rest by hand.'

'Then what's goin' ter become o' my engine?' said Nockolds sullenly.

'She'll ha' ter go inter sale with th' rest,' Preston answered. 'I told th' auctioneers yesterday ter put her inter bills.'

'Did yer?' said Nockolds, seating himself on the rail by the mill door. 'Did yer? Arter twenty year honest sarvice it ha' come to this—my engine ter be put up ter auction for anyone as likes ter buy and ter run as they thinks proper. Well, I'll be gormed! Why, sir, me and my missus wor asayen' we ha' got ter go through somethen' parten' from yer, but now they be agoin' ter take my engine away, be they, blast.' The man spoke with an unsteady voice. 'People shouldn't imitate haven' land if they don't study th' rights o' those what ha' been brought up on it,' he went on. 'Still, they can't take my mill away from me,' and Nockolds gazed up at the whirling sails. 'She belong ter th' Commissioners, and they 'on't ha' strangers amessen' her about. They know different ter that; they know she be a mill wery apt ter get onter gripe and barn herself down if she bain't tended on proper. They 'on't tarn me off as if I wor a bit o' casualty.'

'Still,' replied the farmer, 'yer know as well as I dew, Nockolds, yer can't keep yar family on what th' Commissioners allow yer for looken' arter this one mill, and p'raps not haven' ter

pump more nor once a month. Besides '—and Preston hesitated—'besides—well—I ha' better out with it—Mr. Mackenzie, he say he must ha' yer cottage.'

This piece of information seemed to stagger the engineman. He sat silent for a moment, gazing over the marshes and river with eyes that did not see, then he broke out furiously: 'Ha' my cottage; th' cottage my father and mother brought their fam'ly up in; th' cottage I wor born in; th' cottage my missus ha' had eight children in; and we ha' been in twenty year and more. Dew yer tell him he'll ha' ter reckon along o' Jim Nockolds afore he ha' it. I'll ha' th' law on him, if there be any law for us poor folk. How can I let him ha' th' cottage? How can I move my Mary, with her poor leg and all? She ha' been bedridden ever since she wor a mite o' a child; why, 'twould be th' kill on her ter move her. I tells yer, master, I ain't agoin', so there 'tis,' and the man brought his fist down on the rail on which he was sitting with such force that it cracked.

'Well, I ha' told yer now,' said the farmer harshly. 'Yer knows I sent yer a paper with th' rest on 'em six month ago ter tell yer yer'd all ha' ter give up yar cottages unless th' new tenant took yer on, and yer'll ha' ter go, Nockolds, so there's no use ataken' on; 'tain't a question o' law. I ha' spoke for yer, and I will agen; I'll dew my best ter get yer a place along o' as gude a master as I ha' been. 'Tain't no use maken' a din about it. Other people ha' had bedridden folk about 'em and ha' moved 'em; yer'll ha' ter dew th' same. I'm wonnerful sorry for yer and for yar poor critter o' a gal; I'm wonnerful sorry for myself that I ha' got ter go; but these here changes will come whether we likes 'em or no.'

'Aye, master, but yer goes cos yer chooses, we goes cos we must; there be a sight o' difference,' said Nockolds with intense bitterness. Preston did not answer but stepped across the plank bridge and made his way over the marshes to the gate leading into the lane.

The engine-man sat staring at the farmer till he was lost to sight. Then he passed his black, oily hand over his forehead and began muttering: 'This come o' twenty year honest sarvice; this come o' lookin' arter yar engine and yar mill as if they wor yar own children. Many's th' time my missus ha' mobbed me for worken' over-time o' nights for narthen when I ha' been painting and triculaten' my engine up, and now they be agoin' ter take and sell her without so much as arsten' o' my leave; putting someone

else inter mill what don't know her ways, letten' her get on th' gripe and barnen' o' herself down as likely as not. And then a-tarnen' me and mine out o' my house; shot out as if we wor muck; poor Mary, tew, who ha' been a-layen' in th' front room all these years, just able ter tend her flowers on th' winder-sill from her bed; my poor gal, who through all her sufferin' ha' allus kept a cheerful face and never offered no complaint ter th' Almighty or narthen'. Well! I ha' had my ups and downs, but never narthen' like this; it dew fare hard ter me ter ha' ter tell 'em when I goes home ter tea. Another place as gude as this be!' went on Nockolds, sorrow giving place to anger, 'Daresay—I be a able-bodied man; I ha' allus done for 'em up ter now, s'pose I can ha' another place. That bain't th' question, 'tis th' tarnen' o' me and mine out what stick in my gullet. Ain't there no law for such as us? That 'ud be different if I worn't a poor man with a big fam'ly. I be fairly crazed about this job, I be. Ah, yer'll dew now,' he said as he stopped the mill. 'Yer ha' done yer bit, and fare ter me I ha' done mine.'

On the table in the front room of Nockolds' cottage a clean white cloth was spread, and the glass lamp standing in the centre lit up the well-polished stone mugs of the three lads seated at the board. In front of the boys was placed a blue jug invitingly full of rich milk, a large home-made loaf, and a plate of dripping, and before the father's vacant place stood a small piece of pickled pork and a pat of butter. Mrs. Nockolds was putting sugar into the children's mugs, a proceeding on her part which tended to economy. Mary, the bedridden girl, lay on her bed, propped up by two or three pillows, holding in her arms the year-old baby, whilst her mother served the tea to the rest of the family. Mary was about eighteen years of age, and possessed the delicate prettiness often found on the faces of those who pass their lives in resigned suffering. A fall had brought on hip-disease when she was between two and three years old, and she was now a helpless cripple, suffering much pain at times, yet bright and cheerful, ever more ready to sympathise with the troubles of others than to call attention to her own sad condition.

Her bed was placed in front of the diamond-paned window, and on the long, wide sill were arranged her pots of flowers—fuchsias, geraniums, pelargoniums, musk, and a straggling crimson China rose. Most of the geraniums were in full bloom, and all the flowers were growing as only cottage window-plants do grow. These were Mary's treasures, watered from the little red

can with the long spout which her father had given her, looked at and gone over every morning, and all dead or yellow leaves and withering blooms carefully removed. Mary's flowers were the admiration of the village street—indeed, on the most dismal day the window with its wreath of bloom made a note of colour which could not fail to attract the attention of the passers-by.

'Now then, Albert, don't yer help yarself ter all th' dripping on th' plate; dew yer try and larn as there is others besides yarself whose maws want fillen', said Mrs. Nockolds to the eldest boy in a tone of remonstrance. At this moment a hand was heard on the back-kitchen door and Mary sat the baby up on her knee and cried, 'Listen, baby, here come dadder.' The child squirmed its little arms round and began to laugh and crow.

'Ah, dirty boy!' said Mary as she wiped the slobber from his chin. 'Messen' yerself up like that. How can dadder kiss his boy if he be all wet and nasty?'

'Jim,' shouted Mrs. Nockolds, 'there be some hot water in th' bowl for yer ter rinse yar hands in, and dew yer pull off them crotch butes—I ha' scrubbed th' back'us floor t'arternoon, and th' bricks be right roser.'

Nockolds did not give his usual cheery answer, and as no reply was made to his wife's question as to what sort of a night it was, Mrs. Nockolds put down the tea-pot and exclaimed:

'Why, whatever be th' matter o' Father ternight; ha' yer lost yer tongue, Jim?' but stopped in amazement as she noticed the hopeless look on her husband's face as he stepped in his stockinged feet into the room. The children put down their slices of bread and gazed open-mouthed at their father, who threw himself into his chair and rested his head in his hands.

'Be yer onwell, Jim; what ha' happened ter yer?' asked his wife anxiously.

'I don't want narthen' ter eat,' said Nockolds, pushing away the plate his wife had set before him. 'Give us a dish o' tea, I ha' got my gut full a'ready.'

Presently he repeated the conversation he had had with Farmer Preston, and when he came to the leaving of the old home a wail went up from all the family.

'Whatever we ha' got ter dew fair beat me, arter twenty years' sarvice, tew. And yer,' turning to his wife, 'a-doin' o' th' dairy and a-rearen' o' th' fowls and then ter be tarned out like rubbidge. And poor Mary, how are we to move sich as her, I'd like ter know, and all her pretty gays in th' winder; we'll never

get another housen with a winder like that for her, 'taint likely; there ain't one narthen' like it in this parish, nor in no other as I knows on. And then my engine,' the man went on with increasing bitterness, 'I ha' crazed myself over looken' arter her, and keepen' on her bright and clean as a golden watch. And now she be a-goin' inter strange hands ter be let down and rust herself up; but, there, that don't fret me so much as how we can move our poor Mary.'

'Father,' said the girl as she heard her name, 'don't yer take on about me. I know 'tis hard on yer and Mother ter leave th' cottage, but,' and here the voice faltered, 'I can go wheresoever we ha' ter go along o' th' furniture in th' waggon, and, maybe, if there bain't a winder-sill yer can put up a wide shelf for th' plants agen th' winder. It be a main bad job, sartenly, but, there, we ha' ter go trew with it.'

'Ah, it be all very well fer yer ter lay there a-praten' and arrangen' matters, Mary, when me and Mother be so upset-like,' said Nockolds harshly. Mrs. Nockolds, with her head in her apron, was sobbing loudly. 'Just as if that wor as easy as kiss yer hand ter get another place and find a house sich as yar mother ha' been 'customed tew. Cheerful,' he went on, in answer to a remark of Mary's, 'I don't see how yer can imitate o' bein' cheerful. Fare to me this be a calamity; I'on't wote no more for them Conservatives if this be th' law for us poor folk, shot out o' housen when we never owed a penny o' rent and all. Here, Mother, I can't sit at home ternight, dew yer get me my highlows,' and slipping on his boots the engineman took up his hat and went up the street.

When Mrs. Nockolds returned from putting the children to bed she noticed that her daughter's cheeks were wet with tears. The mother bent down and kissed the invalid girl. 'Don't yer take ter heart what yer father ha' said, my gal,' she said gently. 'He be a bit upset ternight, and so be I, but he don't mean ter be onkind ter yer, Mary.'

Mary pressed her mother's hand. 'I know, Mother,' she answered. 'It wor o' him I wor thinken'. I never wor no help, and now, when we ha' ter move out o' th' owd house, I fare ter be a wus ill-convenience ter yer nor ever. But I *can* go along o' th' furniture, Mother. I can go atop o' th' tables and chairs, don't yer trouble o' yarselves for me. I never did think as how I'd dew a move on this earth; 'twill be my fust and last, maybe—let's hope so; th' Lord above is wonnerful kind, and p'raps He'll move

me next time, and then I shan't be no more trouble ter yer and Father.'

'Mary,' said Mrs. Nockolds sternly, 'don't yer ever let me hear yer talk like that; why, 'twould just onsense yar father ter lose yer. I know yar ha' got yer afflictions, and we ha' got ter keep yer instead o' yer going ter sarvice like yar sisters, but we don't pay no regard ter that—we couldn't get on without yer, no how. Yer does all yer can ter help, minden' th' babies as they come along; and as th' parson say only t'other day, keepen' a cheery face for everyone and agrowen' o' them flowers for folk ter smell on. Don't yer take on a-cryen' yer eyes out cos Father wor a bit sharp, dew yer'll give yarself one o' them sick headaches.' The woman kissed her daughter again, put out the light, and went upstairs to her baby who was crying for its nourishment.

Nockolds sullenly accepted the inevitable. Farmer Preston found him a place as engineman with Squire Reynolds of Upton, and the man on his return from an interview with the squire told his family he had decided to take the situation.

'Th' house be but a mod'rate one, and stand all alone out on th' mashes in th' shader o' th' windmill,' he told his wife, and a gleam of satisfaction passed across his face as he added that besides his mill he had to work a steam pumping engine some half a mile further on. Mrs. Nockolds feared it would be a long walk to school for the children, and that Mary would find it 'wonnerful dull with narten' but th' river and th' wherries ter look on, and she used ter th' willage street.' But Mary thought it would be 'right proper' to see the wherries and the yachts go sailing by.

From early morning on the tenth of October Nockolds had been busy dismantling the old home and packing with furniture, and the miscellaneous collection of odds and ends that everyone gets round him in a lifetime, the waggon sent over by his new master. It was past seven when he came into the front parlour to get his tea with his family, who were seated on up-turned boxes and a form, while the table made shift with a newspaper in place of the usual white cloth.

'Well, if this be moven' I want no more on it,' he exclaimed as he took a mug of tea and a crust of bread and butter from his wife's hands and leant against the wall, for there was no chair to sit on. 'I be pretty nigh done now 'cept for these few things,' and he cast a glance round the all but empty room. 'Lor, we be in a proper muddle bain't we, Mother; and, dang me, if things worn't bad enow before, it be agoin' ter rain—there be a rare show

for rain termorrow. That'll be a pleasant twenty mile in th' rain, and all our bedden' gotten' soaked. How dew yer get on, Mother?' he asked between the mouthfuls of bread and butter. 'Tired out like th' rest on us, daresay.'

'That I be, Jim,' the woman answered. 'I never could ha' thought we'd ha' got such a lot o' truck round us in these few years. How and where ter pack all mander o' things I hardly knowed, and where they all be I can't say.'

'Yer'll all ha' ter make shift as best yer can ternight,' went on Nockolds. 'I ha' left out a mattress or tew and yer'll ha' ter lay onter floor. Yer 'on't sleep late, that's a sure moral, for I shall ha' ter finish loaden' up afore 'tis light; we orter get onter road sune arter seven, so as we get ter Upton and get a few o' th' things inter place afore it get dark, and make our poor Mary as comfortable as we can. I fare ter think yer'll feel th' journey, gal,' and he looked sadly at his daughter, whose bed still remained intact. 'Yer must keep a brave heart on yer, my mawther; if that dew rain I ha' borrowed a proper cart cloth ter cover right over yer.'

'Never mind, Father, I shall dew all right, daresay. I dew wish as how I could get up and help yer and Mother; that be right wexen' alayen' here and doin' narthen' 'cept mind th' baby. But there 'tis, I can't,' said Mary very sorrowfully.

As Nockolds had prophesied Michaelmas Day came in with a blinding rain. As the morning light slowly and sullenly broke over the newly ploughed fields, the stubbles, and the marshes, lowering grey clouds, full of rain, shut in the surrounding landscape. A heavy downpour greeted the eyes of the many families who were moving that day, for when a big farm in a parish changes hands there are many flittings. Some could stay, but fancy a change, hoping to better themselves, to go where work may be lighter or wages higher; others have to go whether they wish it or not, for the incoming tenant may be bringing with him some valued farm servant, and a cottage is needed for his accommodation. So all day long at Michaelmas-tide heavy waggons lumber through the villages, waggons piled high with furniture, household necessities, bedding, crockery, all jumbled together, with a waggon-cloth sparingly covering the contents from the weather, and seated on the top of everything a woman, with two, or three, or more children, as the case may be, while the husband leads the trace-horse, and a lad sits on the shafts driving the wheeler. All have sad faces, some are weeping, for even if they are moving to

better themselves there is an element of uncertainty in the proceeding, and always there is the utter discomfort of the move itself. Some, maybe, have a journey of thirty miles to go, slowly dragging and jolting along; little heads grow weary with watching the fresh scenery, and arms ache from supporting tired children. Food, too, is a source of trouble, for there is nothing for the family save what the mother's basket contains. And then, when the long journey is at last over, nothing but an empty and often dirty cottage, with the litter of the outgoing people lying about, and a weary wait, shivering in the cold, while the father unloads the waggon and places the things anywhere he can, awaiting the morning's light in which to put the house in order.

Almost before it was day Mrs. Nockolds was seated on the top of the big waggon containing the furniture, with an umbrella sheltering as best she could the baby in her arms and the three little boys, each of whom had an old sack over his shoulders. The legs of the tables and chairs stuck above the green cart-cloth, for whichever way Nockolds had tried it, it had proved insufficient to cover everything, and the mahogany chairs, which the arms of Mrs. Nockolds had polished for twenty years, and which had been her pride since the day when she and her husband had purchased them in Norwich, were jolting and scratching themselves as the waggon moved slowly over the deep ruts in the road. Black cooking utensils and bright tin kettles were piled up and roped in on the tail-board, getting rusty from the rain that poured from the black clouds overhead. Two lads urged the horses with shouts of 'woosh' as they wanted the leader to bear to the right, or 'cum harley' to the left, to pull their heavy load. Behind, leading the one horse attached to the 'morfrey,' walked Nockolds, every now and then looking over his shoulder at Mary, who lay on the top of the collection of mattresses the Nockolds family possessed, partly for comfort and partly to keep them dry, for stretched above her was another waggon cloth, which, as the cart was smaller and not so loaded with furniture as the waggon, completely sheltered her from the weather. Packed in round her were her many pots of flowers, and sundry treasures in the shape of a clock, china dogs, and glass vases, put there for safety.

Everyone had shed tears when the waggons started, and there was another outburst when a turn of the road hid the old home from view. They jolted on till Mr. Preston's farmhouse was reached. 'Fare ye well, Nockolds,' cried the farmer after them.

'Gude luck ter yer. I ha' got yer a gude place and a gude master, mind yer keeps 'em!'

'Thank ye, sir,' Nockolds replied. 'Arter twenty years' sarvice I thinks I knows how ter look arter things.' The farmer nodded his head and turned in at his gate.

On went the carts, down country roads, over bridges, through villages, and the rain came down in a deluge. The horses were tired with their big loads, for the roads were heavy, and from time to time one or other of the waggons would stick in a rut, the wheels nearly up to their axles in the soft ground. When the high road was reached the going was better and the procession kept on its way till it arrived at Ludham village, where, as it was nearly eleven o'clock, Nockolds stopped his sweating horses to give them a bait of corn. At the door of the King's Arms Mrs. Nockolds and the children climbed down from their high seat, glad to stretch their limbs and to rest from the swaying and jolting of the waggon. The innkeeper's wife came out to greet them.

'Miser'ble weather for th' moven', ain't it? Come inter house and th' children can dry themselves afore th' kitchen fire. Why, what ha' yer got there?' she inquired, and she pointed to the tent-like erection raised above the waggon in which Mary lay.

'That be my poor gal,' said Mrs. Nockolds. 'She be bed-stricken, can't move, hain't done for years, poor mawther. How be yer a-getten' on, Mary?' and the mother crossed the road to where the 'morfrey' was drawn up, lifted the cloth, and looked at her daughter.

'Oh, I be wonnerful mod'rate, Mother. I shall be glad when it be all over; that fare ter jolt my poor hip so, th' pain ha' come on a rum' un; that wor wus when we got in th' ruts,' Mary answered in a feeble voice.

'Can't yer bring th' poor girl inside for a few minutes?' cried the landlady. 'No? She look wery white about th' gills, that she dew. Let me get her a drop o' spirits, that'd warm her up a bit and rewife her. I know what,' she went on as Mary shook her head at the offer of spirits, 'I'll heat her a drop o' corfy—will she ha' a drop o' brandy in it? It'd dew her a power o' gude.'

'No, she never take no liquor,' said Mrs. Nockolds, 'but if yer ha' got a drop o' corfy mayhap she'll drink it.'

Nockolds and the men were enjoying a pint of beer and Mrs. Nockolds thought she could fancy a glass of stout. The children stood and dried their wet feet at the kitchen fire, munching sausage-rolls and scattering crumbs all over their little overcoats,

while the unheard-of luxury of a bottle of frothing ginger-beer added greatly to their enjoyment. The landlady carried out to Mary a steaming cup of coffee, which the girl sipped listlessly. When the horses had finished throwing their nose-bags in the air and had munched the last oat they contained, the travellers took their seats on the wet waggon-cloth, Nockolds cried 'Gee-up,' and the procession started on the last stage of its journey.

'We be well on th' way now, Mary gal,' said her father, as he shook the water from the folds of the tarpaulin. 'Keep yer heart up, I 'on't jolt yer more nor I can help.'

'All right, Father,' Mary answered, forcing herself to speak with a strong voice. 'I can hold out for a time, dew yer get on.'

Still the relentless rain continued. The wind blew in strong puffs and bellied out the coverings of the waggons which flapped against the furniture, scratching and denting the polished surfaces with the brass eyelet-holes as the ends flew out in the wind. Many weary miles were made ere the procession turned off the high road on to the marsh track which led to Nockolds' new home. The track was very soft, and before the waggon had gone far it stuck in the black, peaty ruts, and the tired horses refused to move.

Nockolds was obliged to take the horse out of the 'morfrey' and hook it on to the waggon, leaving Mary alone, while with the extra power he brought the waggon to the cottage door, where all alighted, glad at last to have reached their destination.

'Here be th' key, Mother—let's get Mary out o' th' wet as sune as we can. Dew yer light a bit o' fire. I ha' got a bag o' coal nigh at hand.' With two horses he hurried back to his sick girl, and her cart was pulled up behind the waggon. The children were scampering through the empty rooms, rushing upstairs and downstairs, peeping into cupboards, examining everything with true childish curiosity.

'Here, Bill, dew yer lend me a hand ter lift my poor gal on her mattress inter house,' Nockolds shouted. Mary groaned as the men carried her in, for her weight bellied the mattress, and the change of position hurt her shaken and suffering body.

'Lay her down nigh th' grate, and when th' fire barn up that'll warm her,' said Mrs. Nockolds. 'There, my poor gal, yer'll ha' no more jolten' now,' she added, as the men gently laid the mattress on the floor.

'Gawd's truth!' cried Nockolds, 'how white th' mawther be! Mary, Mary, be yer was?'

There was no answer—Mary's little strength had given out, and she lay white and rigid on her hard bed.

'She be right cold,' exclaimed Mrs. Nockolds, catching hold of her daughter's hand. 'I believe she be dade or else fainted. Dear, oh dear, what shall us dew out here, miles from anyone ter get help.'

'Be there a doctor nigh?' asked Nockolds of the man who had fetched them in the waggons.

'Nighest be at Blofield, that be tree or four miles off,' was the answer.

'And there be no un ter send,' said Nockolds in despair. 'Bain't there anyone close by as 'ud go for us?'

The man shook his head wearily. 'Bain't no un nigh here as I knows on; might be up at th' Squire's farm.' The man looked at the parents' agonised faces. 'If there bain't I'll go so sune as I ha' racked my hosses up,' added the good-natured fellow who was already tired out with his long tramp.

'That be right kind o' yer, Bill, and I 'on't forget yer neither. Go as quick as yer can; see, she be acomen' round now. Dew yer take th' hosses out o' th' shafts—I'll unload. Dew yer get yarself a pint on th' way,' and Nockolds pressed sixpence into the man's hand.

The fire burnt up brightly in the rusty stove, and Mrs. Nockolds brewed some tea, while her husband, with perspiration streaming from his face, staggered into the house with heavy pieces of furniture, depositing them anyhow and anywhere, struggling upstairs with bulky rolls of mattresses and pillows, making the ceilings of the old cottage shake as he flung them on the floor. One little boy was seated by the fire on an upturned pail, holding the crying baby, while the other two carried in such light articles as their small arms could lift. Mary lay motionless on her mattress—only the groans that from time to time escaped her told that she still lived. Suddenly the rapid driving of a cart was heard, and without knocking a young man entered and picked his way through the disorderly furniture to where the girl lay.

'So this is the patient,' he said as he took the girl's hand and felt her pulse.

A shade of anxiety passed over his face as he noted her extreme weakness, and he asked and was told what she was suffering from, undoing her clothing as the details were given him. 'Poor girl,' he said as he rose from his knees after examining her hips and pommeling her stomach. 'A case like this, you know, ought to

have been moved in a proper conveyance. The jolting has set up extreme inflammation of the diseased hip, and it is flying round the pelvis and into her stomach. Why didn't you have an ambulance carriage ?'

'Ambulance,' said Nockolds, 'never heerd tell on 'em. Maybe if I had I couldn't ha' given th' money for 'em.'

'Oh, well, for about three pounds I could have got you one from Yarmouth,' said the doctor. 'Perhaps, though, that would have been more than you could have afforded. Still, it's a pity; the girl's weak, naturally weak, and it's no use mincing matters, it won't be long before her sufferings are over; the pain will get duller soon, and then she'll sink, I fear. Still, I'll do what I can for her. Can you send up to my surgery for some physic. I have another house to call at near here, but shall be home in about half an hour.'

'I hain't got no one I can send,' said Nockolds in a slow, dull voice. 'I'd go myself, but if things be as bad as yer says I don't like leaven' th' missus. Look yer here, master, I'll give anyone a shilling as'll bring th' stuff down—may be yer can find someone ter bring it.'

'All right, I'll get it to you somehow, and I'll call as early as I can in the morning,' said the doctor. 'Good-night. You seem to be in a fearful muddle. Ah! moving is no joke, is it?' He sprang into his cart and drove rapidly away.

The three children had curled themselves up on a mattress upstairs and were sleeping soundly. The medicine had come, and with it some brandy which had somewhat revived the dying girl. Nockolds, with tears streaming down his face, sat watching the face of his best loved child, and the mother, sitting on the edge of the mattress, fondled the girl's hand in hers, turning away her face to hide her sobs. One small lamp, whose globe had been broken in the move, dimly lit the untidy room, and the firelight played on the figure of the young girl whose life was ebbing away. Presently Mary opened her eyes and whispered:

'Mother, Father, don't yer take on so; I be agoin' where there be no more jolten', but I be glad I ha' seen th' house. Shouldn't like ter ha' gone without knowen' what manner o' house yer wor in. 'Tain't such a bad room when Mother ha' tidied it up a bit,' and her eyes travelled over the piled-up tables and chairs, the flour-bin, the pictures leaning against the walls, the Dutch clock on its back staring up at the ceiling, to the window, and she added: 'Why, there be a good big sill arter all for my plants if

I'd been goin' ter stop. Yer'll look arter 'em, won't yer, Mother? There be th' new fuchsia cutten' th' parson's daughter give me, that suck up a sight o' water. And, Father'—here the girl's voice grew weaker, so that the man had to stoop to catch the words—'I ha' fifteen shillings in my box what I ha' made t'year o' my crochey and patchwork cushions. Dew yer buy a paper and put on th' walls; th' room want a clean paper, and that'd please Mother. Choose one o' them flock kind, all covered o' bunches o' pink roses. When yer sees th' flowers yer'll think o' poor Mary.'

The girl gently pressed the hands of her father and mother, looked from one to the other and smiled but did not speak again. Useless were the parents' attempts at forcing brandy through her lips and rubbing her hands and arms. Mary had passed away.

As soon as it was light Nockolds went to his new mill to start the pumping, for the day and night's deluge of rain and a high tide had flooded the marshes, and work must be done and mills attended to in spite of sorrow. Very soon the sails were flying merrily round and the thick yellow flood-water was being churned out into the river.

'Yer'on't come ter no harm for an hour or tew,' said the engineman as he finished oiling the clattering cog-wheels. 'I'd better be a-moven' on ter light th' engine fire and set her agoin'. Yer ain't a bad kinder mill,' he added as he came out of the door and looked up at the whirling sails. 'Yer be a-goin' some stroke.' On the way to the engine he passed the front of his new home. 'Poor Mary!' he exclaimed, looking towards the room where the dead girl lay; 'and we hain't got a bit o' blind ter pull down for yer, neither; 'tain't hardly respectable. I said th' move'd kill yer, and I worn't so far out, neither. Farmer Preston, he say, "I ha' got yer a gude place and a gude master, mind yer keep 'em." That be true as gorspel if he meant that for Mary, poor mawther. She ha' got all that; she ha' gained it by jolting over th' ruts and rough places; but there,' and the man sighed, 'th' world be full on 'em for th' likes o' us. Me and my missus and th' children ha' got a lot more ruts ter bump over afore our time come; but come it will, thank Gawd, suner or later.'

Nockolds gazed at the clearing east—sunshine would follow rain. In his heart hope sprang anew. He could thank God that for Mary the time had come.

CHAS. FIELDING MARSH.

Loafing-time.

SPEAKING generally, I think I know all or most of those various persons who, year in and year out, and whether by deliberate choice or by misadventure, are to be seen in occupation of the wide fringe which is, at low tide, a splendid field of yellow sand, and at the flood becomes an integral portion of the great Mother Sea. There are the sea-gulls who strut there screaming at early morn, and afterwards stand, breasting the wind and thinking, like the historic young waterman, of nothing at all; there are the rooks that come occasionally, the jackdaws, and the wood pigeons who alight from time to time, for change of diet, perhaps, or only for a breath of sea air. Then there are the derelict crabs, the cockles—praying, doubtless, that the tide may return to cool their parched throats before it is too late—the whistling, nimble, wide-awake sandpipers, the occasional rat, and so forth. All these I know; but when July is out and August the looked-forward-to, the well-beloved, the most desired, is upon us, behold, the little kingdom that is neither man's nor Neptune's becomes suddenly invaded by new arrivals.

One strolls down for the accustomed quiet, peaceful half-hour alone with those who have a vested interest in the place, and, instead of the screaming, statuesque gulls, the whistling, whirling sandpipers, the apologetic rooks that know they have no particular business here, finds—what?

Newcomers—strangers—trespassers, if you will; weird objects they appear to be from a distance, and noisy withal; creatures obviously of some over-mastering, dominating species, for they have driven away every denizen of the place which can fly or swim, yet, when seen closer, to be recognised as dear and harmless beings, nay, most desirable and welcome of guests, even though—during their thirty days' reign here—there be never a gull to dispute possession.

Let me describe them. There are three, and they are of

varying sizes, and represent both sexes. Each propels itself upon two legs, more or less shaky or wobbling, according to the size of the body belonging. These legs, at their first appearance at the beginning of the month, are white in colour, but within a few days begin to develop a delicious brownness which is attractive and charming. Such garments as may be worn are carefully and mysteriously stowed away in a kind of sponge-bag, so that the central portion of the figure appears to be attired in trunk hose of irregular formation. One, it seems, is called Nellie, one Gladys, and the third—a person of very tender age, who falls flat upon his face when his fat little legs are overtaxed, and cries until assisted to his feet again—is Baby. Four yards is, I think, his limit for the maintenance of an upright position, after which a sudden yell announces that he has changed it for a recumbent attitude, the yell being continued until he is set up once again, when it abruptly ceases.

These little creatures go down to the edge of the water from time to time—they belong, I conclude, to some amphibious species—and play in the shallows, but at midday they retire inland to feed. There are elders of the same species sitting further up the beach, with their backs, in fact, to the sea-wall which bounds it at this point; and while the three little ones play they read quietly, or lazily throw stones at nothing. It is a long journey for those three pairs of bare legs from the fringe of the sea up to the spot where the elders sit, especially for those of the smallest child, a very bewitching person of immense energy; yet there is scarcely a moment when one of the three little bipeds is not *en route*, carrying some treasure to be admired, conveying some information of things seen, seeking sympathy, moved by the insatiable desire to share the wonders of discovery: it is a long journey, I say, and involves for Gladys and for Baby many a tumble in the sand, sometimes forward, sometimes in a sitting posture; and the careful observer will note the fact that when a child falls forward it nearly always yells, whereas if it sits down suddenly its face assumes an expression of immense surprise not unmingled with some indignation, but the matter does not apparently run to tears, rarely even to cries of distress.

When Baby has safely accomplished his journey, and has shown his elders that which it was necessary to carry up from the sea for their inspection, or has bawled into their ears some communication which he has been endeavouring to articulate all the way up the beach, he instantly undertakes the return journey,

only to recommence his arduous travels within a minute or two of reaching his destination.

For the sands are full of marvels and of delights almost unspeakable, and the softly lapping wavelets reveal at each silvery recurrence new stores of treasures and wonders which must be described for the benefit of the elders up at the sea-wall as soon as ever the toddling, toppling little legs can convey their owner back again to headquarters.

No wonder those delicious limblets, so white and delicate-looking on the first of August, have become brown and sturdy by the thirty-first, and the little pale faces, that seemed so peaky and transparent at the beginning of the month, wear a different complexion at the end of it, a tint it rejoices one to see. At the end of the month, too, the elders are left to read their books and to throw their pebbles in comparative peace, for all the wonders are now familiar. The treasures to be found are still dear, though sought with less display of excitement, and fewer journeys are made up and back for the conveyance of joyous information there-
anent. The little weird figures in their trunk hose carry on their occupations in a more business-like fashion. Very intently they work; their hearts are still in their operations, but there is less interruption.

Moreover, when they paddle they are now no longer content that the silvery water should cover their ankles—they are not afraid to wade knee-deep; and if a wavelet should come along, deepening for a moment the sea as it passes landward, they stand on tiptoe as naturally as the sea-gulls twenty yards away rise breast-first with the same soft swelling of ocean's breathing bosom.

Talking of sea-gulls, I rarely see a sea-gull eating a good square meal. I would not call him a greedy creature, as some birds undoubtedly are. I have seen a gull follow a steamer all day and then refuse a piece of bread. 'Perhaps he is too tired to eat,' a child suggested; but this theory was presently dispelled when a piece of meat was thrown to him.

Which is the greediest of the birds?—the garden birds, I mean, residents and occasional visitors—the rook? the jackdaw? the blackbird? the starling? I have evidence bearing upon the voracity of each, but I almost think that for his size the blackbird contrives to put away the largest amount of food. His capacity is enormous, and most astonishing if we compare it with our own, *cæteris paribus*, and the proportions duly worked out.

Watch him on the lawn, busy over his meat-course. A worm moves in his subterraneous home an inch or so below the surface of the ground; Mr. Blackbird hears him, and is over the spot in an instant; down goes his yellow beak and up comes the unfortunate, wriggling victim—a gulp or two, and he is gone: a fair meal in himself, you would say, and equivalent to a pound of sausages, at the very lowest computation, if consumed and consumer were both translated to corresponding dimensions.

But our friend is not nearly satisfied. You may watch him unearth and devour half-a-dozen worms, after which he will repair to the strawberry beds for his entremet. He will fly along the nets until he reaches some weak spot he knows of, but which you have not yet discovered; with a dive and a wriggle he is through and beginning a quiet half-hour among your choicest berries, during which time he will not regard the circumstance that such fruit is worth a shilling a pound or near it; he will 'tuck in' until he scarcely possesses the energy to retire when requested to do so by the human owner of the property, preferring to hide among the foliage and lie low until, with the help of that remarkably quick digestion of his, he may feel able to move with comfort.

During that hour of lassitude the green-eyed cat may come and peer through the net, suspecting his presence there, maybe, but he will take no cognisance of her; he is too lazy even to swear at her, and prefers to lie and blink under his strawberry leaves. He feels, I daresay, like the schoolboy in the tuck-shop who has had nine-penn'orth of jam roll, and is then invited by the Captain of the Junior House Eleven to come and field out. He is 'stodged' at last, and incapable of exertion.

The starlings are certainly hearty feeders, but not, I think, to be compared for sheer gluttony with the blackbird.

Moreover, there is something delightfully cordial and genial about the starling. He is such a sociable fellow. He is always a member of a large club, and is not happy unless every one of his friends is about him, sharing in any good thing the gods may have provided him withal, fighting for it—oh, yes, but that's part of the jolly, genial fun of the whole thing—squabbling, talking, swallowing, swearing, jostling; he is not happy unless he can chatter and elbow other fellows about while he eats his meals; as active and as garrulous as a sparrow is he, and ten times as interesting. I always feel that the starling, dear, genial, sociable, splendid fellow that he is (only see him when the sun catches his

delicious glossy head and wings !), never quite receives his deserts in the affection of his human acquaintances. I do not quite know, however, whether this apparent sociability of his is in truth a virtue or the outward and visible testimony to that overweening sense of curiosity and inquisitiveness from which he certainly suffers. Is it that no starling can see another starling go anywhere or do anything but he must do the same in order that—in case his friend should know of a good thing—he may have his share ? On the whole, I prefer to think otherwise ; that a starling who has found something tells his friends one and all, and gets them to come and fight for it, argue for it, shove one another about for it, see him eat it and then talk about it, or what not, but anyhow to come. He is so genial and takes life so intensely that he is not happy without all his friends and relations about him.

This sociability of his cost me, last year, almost the entire harvest of a magnificent pear tree. I don't know whether starlings really like pears so very much ; I think they prefer something they can drag about on the ground and fight over, such as the cast-off rubber sole of an old lawn-tennis shoe (one of mine kept a flock of them happy for a month) ; but be this as it may, it is certain that one fine autumn day last year a starling alighted upon that cherished pear tree of mine, tasted a pear, approved of it and—starling-like—went and talked about it at the club.

At the first streak of rosy dawn next morning that club removed its quarters to my garden ; the members fell chattering upon that pear tree—to each luscious pear a garrulous, surprised, delighted, wasteful, devouring starling. The matutinal stroll in the garden revealed a woeful state of affairs. A cloud of silent, over-feasted birds flew up from that pear tree, to alight upon other trees very close at hand—the 'stodged' schoolboy again, for whom fielding out is a grievance only more tolerable than being asked to bowl or take any other more active exertion. At the foot of the tree lay pears innumerable : pears half-eaten, pears untouched, pears sampled and left, wasted. Up above were a hundred scooped-out relics ; wherever a pear had grown in such a manner that a starling could cling to some twig conveniently near at hand and devour at his leisure, there still hung the outer semblance of a pear, but its substance was gone, scooped out clean and dry, a sight to make angels weep and mortals employ the unhallowed language of the golf links.

The few remaining pears, untouched by these genial robbers, were hurriedly picked, and—shall I be believed?—the mob of watching starlings actually protested, scolding and chattering from their trees close by, as though one deprived them of their vested rights.

There were other pear trees within a few yards, but their fruit remained untouched. This—the best—was alone good enough for these merry fellows. I have been chidden by birds before now, by anxious parents whose fledglings are out for their first airing, by putative parents who have objected to their nests being peeped at and their eggs counted, and so forth; but never have I been hooted by a mob of dissatisfied birds as on that melancholy morning when I made myself so unpopular to the starling crowd by endeavouring to save for my family a few of those splendid pears to which that crowd had pegged out a totally unjustifiable claim. For these fellows, mark you, had no vested rights in my garden, like the Master Thrush and the Master Blackbird, the lawn robin, the robin of the potato patch, and others. They were strangers, or, at best, casual visitors. Well, well—the language of the golf links did not hurt them much, not so much perhaps as the over-indulgence in my *Marie-Louises*—it did not even drive them away. They remained to swear, and I am certain their language was worse than my own.

There is a shrubbery just outside my study window, and the tops of the laurel bushes and other trees reach to about the level of my eyes. During the period of their family ties, when of course Mr. and Mrs. Starling forswear the profane society-life which they delight in during the remaining ten months or so of the year, I see a good deal of a brood of youngsters of that clan who come there to be fed at regular hours. Their insistence, in the demanding of food, is greater than that of any other bird, I think, and certainly more noisy than any, even of a certain young rook of whom I mean to tell presently. During the minutes of suspense—that is, while papa and mamma are still absent collecting food for the meal now due—each youngster is restless and uneasy. Unless he can see every one of his four brothers all the while and be quite sure of what each is doing, he is not happy. He is afraid that papa will thrust the first mouthful into a beak which is not his own, or that mamma may favour a brother, perhaps more insistent than himself, at his expense. Consequently, those laurel bushes are very much alive with chattering, scolding, moving little fluffy persons, for whom there

is no rest by reason of the fiend Jealousy, who is the greatest known enemy to Peace.

But when a parent arrives and the actual eating begins there is pandemonium indeed. How the parent selects the child to be fed the first entirely puzzles me. Does the noisiest win? or he with the sharpest elbows, the cleverest at shoving his brother out of his way? The old bird is himself an excitable person, and so is his glossy missus; do they contrive to keep a level head on such occasions? All five of the youngsters crowd upon the same twig, that which gives a foothold close to the dispensing parent; they elbow one another off, and frequently elbow him off also, and the matter appears to the profane human eyes watching it to be quite hopeless. Yet presently all have been fed, and probably adequately so, for in the place of bewildering, brain-stupefying noise there falls the most delightful restful silence; the meal is over, the dining-room left empty or occupied by a few quiet, self-respecting tits, and the starlings young and old have disappeared—Heaven knows whither. To-morrow at the same hour, and for the same purpose, they will return, and the same noisy comedy will be enacted. Assuredly the family keep the neighbourhood alive during their dinner-hour; but that's the beauty of the starling; he is himself so tremendously alive that it is impossible for others to remain uninfected by his deliciously bracing attitude towards all the affairs of life.

That young rook, now, whom I have mentioned: he too is a terribly noisy fellow, and for this there is less excuse, because he is an only son and takes his meals by himself. Jealousy, for him, should be non-existent; he can only be jealous in a negative fashion, as of moments wasted which might be spent in eating. He can feel no fear lest sister or brother should anticipate by a moment his enjoyment of the delights of the table, yet he is as excited over his meals as though every mouthful were snatched, *vi et armis*, from the jaws of a competitor.

The young glutton comes daily to the big elm at the end of the lawn for a meal which takes place at nine in the morning—his lunch, let us call it. I am certain that far-wandering birds, like the rook, sometimes make rendezvous with their half-emancipated youngsters who are still partly dependent upon the parental generosity for their food. 'Be somewhere in that tall elm over yonder,' they say, 'every day about nine, and you may hear of something to your advantage.' Well, the young rook waits there regularly and the parent comes, and the whole thing is a killingly

funny performance. The youngster waits almost in silence until a far-distant caw conveys the intelligence that kind, faithful mamma has not forgotten her appointment. At the sound his excitement matures suddenly, and the air becomes in an instant vibrate with his frantic appeals for food.

Nearer comes the source of supply; the sound of happy, encouraging caws grows more distinct. 'I am coming,' she seems to shout. 'Can you hold out another minute? Listen how muffled my voice is; that's because I'm carrying a delicious compound in my beak—all for my darling baby-boy!'

The baby-boy's yells of excitement increase; they are still in process of utterance at the moment when the mess of food is pushed into his open mouth. This is the moment to which I look forward every morning with delightful anticipation, for the baby-boy's efforts to swallow and to express his feelings at one and the same moment are comical in the extreme, the loud caws suddenly changing into a choking sound, half-caw, half-gobble, which is quite delightful. Each morning I expect that youngster to fall asphyxiated to earth, afflicted with a spasm of the epiglottis, a victim to gluttony fatally combined with that inordinate desire to talk which is the nature of rooks and of some other creatures on two legs with whom I have, from time to time, scraped acquaintance, not always on the tops of elm trees.

As for conversational powers, the jackdaw certainly holds the palm. I have frequently heard two of these merry fellows talking together for all the world like human beings; there is a question asked, a reply given, demur made, argument used in order to convince, and unwilling acquiescence perhaps, or further argument *contra*. All this is quite obvious, and it is not until the lie direct is reached, or perhaps the lie circumstantial, that the softly modulated and neatly expressed periods degenerate into the frank cawings and quirks of the jackdaw who through fear or excitement has lost control of his voice.

I always wonder whether jackdaws at home are as clownish and amusing in their behaviour, and as inquisitive, as the semi-civilised member of the family who condescends to live upon terms of intimacy among mankind. If so, the jackdaw family life must be an uproariously amusing affair, and certainly there can be no privacy among such inquisitive folk. One can imagine the accuracy of each jackdaw's information as to the private affairs of every other jackdaw. If Mrs. Robinson-Jackdaw has laid another egg, surely Messrs. Brown and Jones, her neighbours, are

immediately aware of the fact, and are there and busy turning it over, inspecting, probably laughing over it, at the very first opportunity, while—as likely as not—Mr. Smith-Jackdaw carries it away with him intending to place it in his wife's nest as a huge joke, and pretend that she laid it, but sets it down somewhere and forgets it.

That unconscionable person, the tame jackdaw who is allowed the freedom of his wings, is a terrible fellow to have for a neighbour. A lady friend assured me but yesterday that while staying with relations in Cheltenham she led a miserable life by reason of one of these birds, the property of people living next door. That jackdaw found out, very early on the morning after her arrival, that a newcomer had appeared. Now, a newcomer for that bird signified a dressing-table covered with a set of toilet apparatus which he had not yet inspected. My friend likes to sleep with her window wide, and upon opening her eyes at the untimely hour of six she beheld an inspiring sight: a jackdaw sat upon her toilet table eating heartily from a pot of cold-cream. She watched him drowsily; it was only a sixpenny pot, and the show was worth that sum. He enjoyed the stuff amazingly, uttering little quirks and cawlets as he devoured it, and when he had finished he wiped his beak upon the cover of a devotional book which lay alongside.

Now the volume was handsomely bound, and this unexpected outrage thoroughly awoke my friend to the situation. She said something aloud, made a ladylike remonstrance, doubtless; whereupon the jackdaw looked up, exclaimed, 'Well, I'm damned!' seized a gold safety-pin, and flew away. Nearly a week expired before that jackdaw had satisfied himself that the toilet belongings of the new arrival had been adequately examined, and during that time he carried away for further inspection several small articles of jewellery and other matters (all of which were brought back by his owners with apologies), and brought—by way of recompense, I suppose, for value received—several articles of value or otherwise belonging to other people, including (*honi soit, &c.*) a small elastic article of apparel for which an owner was never found. I thought it rather charming of the jackdaw to do his best to make up for the losses occasioned by his kleptomaniac tendencies.

The seaside, from the point of view of the children, is always bliss. As for the 'grown-ups,' there are, of course, some who 'for reasons' would never be happy living anywhere else, just as the true Londoner cannot be induced to remain long away from

Piccadilly. Such inveterates are not here reckoned with; but adults who go down to the sea with the children may enjoy life if they possess the gift of being able to loaf. Some people cannot loaf; a loafer is born, not made. Sparrows and starlings cannot loaf; very few birds can, though perhaps gulls approach the nearest to being skilled in the art. No one who is fussily disposed can loaf. I suppose Spaniards and Red Indians are the best loafers, but there are some of our own people who are fairly good. It is a pretty art, and its successful practice involves an enviable frame of mind. To be able to lie and watch other people on the beach for hours at a time, doing nothing more energetic than throwing pebbles at a hat or a lump of seaweed or a dog, and to care not a cent for anything in the world excepting whether one hits or misses the object, or how near one can come towards hitting it, is very charming.

What a calamity is a wet day in August! What a miserable procession of dreary hours for the thousands of little fretting, sun-browned beings mewed up in poky lodging-houses and longing for those delightful yellow sands which are so near and yet so far! Certainly all good-hearted Christians should pray for fine weather during August, if only for the benefit of these disappointed little souls.

In this best of worlds all things are, of course, arranged for the very best; but as a hard-worked gardener, wearied with much watering of flowers, remarked to me one evening, he could not understand why all the rain that had to fall could not be made to come at night. 'It would save us gardeners a world of trouble,' he added plaintively, 'and be much usefuller to the flowers and things.'

It would save human beings a great deal of fretting and no inconsiderable amount of bad language too; but then those who do not fret, who curb their unruly tongues, who grin and bear the troubles and vicissitudes of this mortal life, would be deprived of some of the fair leaves of their chaplet of merit. Moreover, there would be nothing to talk about, the chief subject of conversation having thus been eliminated from existence.

As to this matter of the weather, the Chinese manage affairs so very much more wisely than we do. They leave the whole thing in the hands of a blind man, who arranges the entire question for a year in advance. It is done thus: In a temple in Peking the figure of a large ox is placed, fashioned in clay, and coloured white. Then a blind man is introduced, and left alone

with the ox and sundry pots of paint of various colours, and a paint-brush.

Being, naturally, unable to distinguish which colour is which, the blind man proceeds to paint that ox, dipping his brush and daubing the paint upon various portions of the beast at haphazard—here a patch of yellow, there a daub of green, and so on. This would seem to the uninitiated but a harmless if somewhat foolish pastime, since the blind artist cannot, in the ordinary nature of things, see the result of his labours, and therefore can take little delight in the occupation. Yet the function is the most important possible, since the whole of the agricultural prosperity of the nation for a year depends upon the exact outcome of that blind man's seemingly haphazard excursions between paint-pots and clay ox.

When his labours are finished, the now parti-coloured ox is reproduced in a thousand small models, each one most carefully coloured in exact imitation of the original. A replica is sent to every principal temple throughout the Empire, there to be displayed for a while to the populace in the temple yard. On a given day there is a function. The priest delivers an oration before the assembled people, who have crowded to the rendezvous from all parts of the country, finishing his sermon by touching the coloured model with his wand, when the people instantly fall upon it, smash it to pieces, and scramble for the atoms. Happy are they who succeed in possessing themselves of a particle or two to mix in their manure heaps or to distribute in powder over their fields, for this will assure them a good harvest.

Meanwhile the colouring of the ox in Pekin affords a clue to the destiny of the Empire as regards the weather, the prospects for the crops, the general prosperity of the inhabitants, and so forth. For if the blind man has daubed generously from the yellow paint-pot, there will be plenty, peace, all things favourable to happiness. Red signifies fires and pestilence; black and white mean rains—the Celestials are pleased to see that a modicum of these paints has been used—while green gives grim promise of illness and of high winds.

If I were a Celestial I have not the slightest doubt that I should give the blind man the 'straight tip,' together with its equivalent in coin of the realm; and certainly the investment would be a profitable one.

Why cannot we set up something of this sort in England? A little bit of the model of a coloured ox, mixed in the soil of

my Devonshire garden, might have prevented the total failure of my plums this summer and the partial collapse of the apple crop. While if, by the exercise of a little ordinary discretion and prevision, our English blind man had known his way to the yellow paint-pot, we might have been saved the post-diluvian deluges of the past season, and secured unto ourselves comfort, happiness, prosperity, plenty, and I know not what blessings besides.

Truly the Chinese know how to arrange these little matters very much better than ourselves. We in England are behind the times.

In speaking of loafers, of course I do not allude to the professionals. I do not envy these fellows the accomplishment which is their perpetual occupation, and must, I should think, be far more wearing than hard work. Undoubtedly the men about the harbour are easily first in the art of loafing—men who stand about waiting for the mackerel to come into the bay. They wait for about three hundred and sixty days of the year, and work languidly and under protest for the other five. Their waiting time is spent in standing and looking out to sea, smoking, spitting, and, when the wife's generosity runs to it, or someone has paid them sixpence for pulling at a rope to which a boat is attached, in making occasional visits to a handy little public-house at the harbour-head. When a shoal of mackerel has been sighted, it is entertaining to watch these hard-worked English fishermen; only let the sensitive and the thin-skinned keep at a respectful distance, for no sooner is our friend the Champion Loafer involved in an enterprise which necessitates actual exertion than his amiability, supposing this surly class to possess any, goes by the board, and there is language in the air which would certainly shrivel the vegetation around if there were any; but fortunately all this happens at sea. These good fellows do not so much mind sitting all day in a large row-boat waiting for the slight disturbance in the water which indicates the anguish of a shoal of small fry pursued by mackerel, or rather surrounded by their voracious pursuers and in process of being transferred from the open sea to the confinement awaiting them, as the mackerel swallow each unfortunate little victim whole. What annoys the professional loafer is to be obliged to row very hard for five minutes or more when one of these disturbed patches is viewed, and it has become necessary to approach quickly and surround the shoal. To do this requires considerable exertion on their part, for the thing must be done rapidly. The circle of mackerel may break and

the fry escape, in which case their haste would be all in vain. So they row and swear aloud, while their skipper shouts encouragement. The skipper himself is not rowing, because his duty is to throw out the net by armfuls when the shoal is reached, while the others row in a circle; but his words of encouragement are a tissue of swear-words: he swears at the men and they at him, and both at the necessity for so much exertion, and so the work proceeds. When a porpoise intêrvenes, as he does occasionally—for the mackerel have not reached the extreme of the scale of existence when one pursues but is not pursued—our cheery loafers give forth such wealth of vituperative English that it is a marvel the porpoise stops to hear himself so sulphurously spoken of. He does not seem to mind, however, but goes his own way, swallows a hundred or so of mackerel, tears the net, likely enough, into shreds, and departs in his merry, light-hearted fashion, pursued by the very hearty curses of the fishermen, but not a whit disturbed thereby as he rolls and dives and gambols along upon his jolly course through life.

These swearing, loafing, lazy fellows are the disturbers of the peace of the bay: I do not like them. I wish their wives, who are mostly laundresses, would refuse to keep them longer in idleness, and send them away to earn their living as 'hands' upon some trawling smack or elsewhere.

Have you ever heard the starlings sing their evening chorus upon the tree-tops just before retiring to roost? It is like the sound of a cataract. They all sing and nobody listens. Why do they do it? what is the idea of it?—a kind of 'grace before sleeping,' an evening hymn of thanks for a happy day and lots of good food? or simply an expression of the jollity and good-nature which at all times seem to animate the breasts of these merry speckled people? At any rate, it is a pleasant thing to hear this twitter-chorus of theirs, though their music is not of first-class quality when judged by the standard of the Master Thrush and such great performers. The curious part of it is that a starling can sing so much better than he does if he likes to take the trouble; but he prefers to produce foolish little clownish sounds, because he is always brimming over with fun and merriment, and has no soul for classical music.

When they have sung enough they suddenly finish, and disperse among the laurel bushes and elsewhere to sleep. In the morning they figure as solo singers again, reserving their combined efforts for the evening.

What curious folk sea-gulls are in the matter of treasure trove of an eatable description! I have watched them when scraps of food have been thrown among a shrieking, wheeling host of hungry kittiwakes from a house built close to the cliff. Sufficient morsels were shot over the edge to feed the entire community, yet the gull which secured the first piece was pursued by half-a-dozen jealous, screaming companions, who preferred to attempt to dispossess their friend of his treasure rather than swoop and pick up for themselves from the plenty that awaited them below. When the first gull had been pursued for a minute or two upon a zigzag course he would drop his morsel—perhaps to protest, though I trust he contrived to bite a piece off before letting it go—whereupon another promptly snatched it and was in turn pursued, each gull having his turn of possession and of dispossession until the morsel had been lost or gradually consumed—a matter of ten minutes or more, during which time other gulls had finished the supply nearer home. Now, one would suppose that as food was tipped over for these gulls every day of their lives at the same place and hour, every one of them would have been well aware that it would pay him better to remain and partake in peace of the goods the gods provided rather than waste the priceless moments in squabbling over some other fellow's share; yet it does not seem to be the way of these birds to learn by experience—unless it be that they are of so 'sporting' a kidney that they prefer a fight or a competition to a square meal.

It seems, however, to be an article in the faith of most birds, from a sparrow to an ostrich (if bird he may be called), that stolen food, or food that has been fought for, is the sweetest. Perhaps it is less trouble to snatch a crumb from your neighbour's mouth than to pick it up for yourself; certainly the sparrows think so, and it is strange how a stronger sparrow will acquiesce with complete amiability in the loss of his treasure, even though the aggressor be the feeblest weakling of his clan.

As for the youngsters, they will pretend for weeks that they are too tiny to cater for themselves, simply to save a little trouble. They will flutter their wings and open their mouths and utter many piteous untruths in order to secure another mouthful or two from papa or mamma. 'Oh, *do* feed me,' they seem to cry. 'I am so small, I have not been able to scrape up any food for myself. I'm starving, mother—look at me, father, I'm simply as thin as a whipping-post!' when all the while one has seen with one's own eyes that the little rascals have stuffed themselves

so full that the wonder is how their credulous parents can squeeze any more victuals into their replete little carcasses. How lucky it is that the sparrows are garrulous folk and have plenty to say during every part of the year! There are times, in the quiet season, when one is quite grateful to the little twittering, chirping things, and grows quite fond of their voices. A sparrow talks about everything he sees or does or intends to do. If he sees a straw or a piece of paper or anything that will do for his nest at the breeding season, he will take the opinions of all his friends about it: Is it suitable? Should he pick it up and carry it to the nest and try it? Isn't it too long or too short? too hard, too soft, too anything? All his friends are delighted to express their opinions; they love to hear their own voices. If he sees a piece of food he will even talk about that before eating it, if he is given time by his envious companions. If he has not anything to talk about, he will talk cheerfully and volubly about nothing, and so will all his family.

I must confess that I admire this perpetual cheerfulness of the sparrow. When the lark is a silent if not an absent bird, when the Master Thrush and Master Blackbird are dumb, and the nightingale is a croaky voice, to be heard occasionally in the spinnies and coppices—a voice which you would certainly never recognise as that of the great Prince of Bird Singers—the sparrow's chirping is a welcome note in the garden, and the cheerfulness of which it is the outward and visible sign covers a multitude of sins.

Have you ever watched two or three young birds whose time has arrived to leave the parental nest, and who cannot make up their minds to take the plunge? They are for all the world like timid bathers who stand and shiver at the brink, and ask those fortunate ones who are already in the water whether it is cold. Just so do the little shivering creatures stand at the edge of the nest, chirping out many questions to little companions, who reply from somewhere among the bushes. 'Is it all right down there?' they seem to say. 'Is it soft falling? Are there any cats about?' 'Come on,' shout the older hands impatiently. 'Don't be a funk; it won't become easier by waiting. The cat's having its dinner in the kitchen.' 'It's such a fearful height!' chirps the shiverer, and stands and shivers on while another day drags its wingless moments onward, and perhaps a second. I have seen three little fly-catchers occupy four days in making up their minds to fly; when at length they made the plunge, behold! they flew almost as easily as their mother.

But 'loafing-time' is nearly over; one must pocket one's book and gather up one's papers, and prepare to leave this delicious edge of the sea, or peradventure the darkness will cover one. The sun sinks and the gulls have disappeared, heaven only knows whither. Also the owners of the three pairs of brown legs have been carried thereby to their homes, and the shore seems very blank without them, and very silent without the sound of their happy voices, the high-pitched cry of the kittiwakes, the whistle of the sandpipers, and the occasional caw of a rook or the chatter of an inquiring jackdaw. Like a certain little person I know, I do not wish to be surprised by darkness. This entertaining lady, whose summers have numbered eight, all told, begged me on a certain occasion not to use the word 'peradventure,' which, I suppose, I had employed for her edification.

'Why not?' I asked, surprised, when—to my immense delight—she informed me that if I did so, darkness would infallibly cover me.

Upon inquiry it proved that this small, charming person had been in the habit of interpreting a certain quotation in a manner different from the ordinary reading of the words, as thus: 'If I say "peradventure," the darkness will cover me.' She therefore wisely refrained from using a word the employment of which would be fraught with such terrible consequences.

The same lady, after gasping through the Litany on a hot Sunday morning in church, informed me that she had liked the service very much, 'all but the matinée, which was much too long.' She meant the Litany. If you question other churchgoers of about her age you will find that many of them call this particular portion of the service 'the Linaty'!

So put up your possessions, Mr. Loafer, and follow the gulls and the little brown-legged strangers homewards. After all, it is but for a few hours; to-morrow shall be as to-day—look at the sky, the sunset, the direction of the wind; thanks be to all good powers that rule things climatic, to-morrow is going to be a fine day. This month was made for young birds and young children, that they may take their fill of the pleasant things of this world while they last, and for loafers who—needing such rest as only true loafing can give—are wise enough to sit in the sun while it shines.

FRED WHISHAW.

Jellyby's Plot.

BEING one of the Stinks lot (the Scientific Side, they call it) in old Catesby's school—his nickname is Guy Fawkes, I never could see why—I know all about Jellyby's plot. In fact, but for me, it might have ended very different, and got into the papers.

It began with Jellyby, for our second eleven, bowling out the Grammar School for 23, his analysis being overs 19, runs 11, wickets 10, maidens 12. On the strength of this, Bull—that is our captain, going up to Wadham with a scholarship—took and rammed Jellyby into the school team, just to try him, against the advice of Caterham (or Cats), who said that old Jellybags was a duffer of a field, and no bat—only slogging at everything, which is true.

When we played the Town, Jellybags dropped no less than three catches off Cats; but he got six wickets for 59, and knocked up 24, going in last wicket, while Bull, who went in second wicket down, got his century, not out. This pleased Bull awfully, Jellybags not having dropped the catches off *his* bowling.

But Cats went about crabbing Jellybags, and in the next match, against the Castle, Jellybags happened to be off his bowling, got knocked about by Lord Rokeby's gamekeeper, and collared a duck. However, in a House match he stuck up Bull fearfully, and got him l.b.w. So Bull, who admitted he was out, was nearly resolved to play him against M.C.C., and give him his colours. Bull said he was quite a decent bowler; but Cats was heard crabbing Bags (we mostly call him Bags for short) worse than ever, and a fellow in the Upper Fifth, who knew Bull at home, told Bags that he believed he would get the sack, which made him gloomy and desperate.

In case you take up a very bad opinion of old Bags, I ought to tell you what kind of customer he was. I knew him better

than most fellows, and though it was an awful thing that Bags was on, especially for a fellow almost in the school eleven to think of, still there were excuses. He was not exactly English; his people were somehow connected with India, and Bags admitted (indeed, he was rather proud of it) that his great-grandmother had been a Begum or Ranee of sorts, which means a queen among the niggers out there. Their notions are not like white men's, and Bags's notions were in his blood, I dare say; besides, you will see that he could not live up to them.

There was another rum thing about Bags. He was a queer sort of old rabbit, always reading books, though very low in the school. To do him justice, Bags was no swot. It was not Livy and Cicero, and rotters of that sort, that Bags read; and, of course, he had funk'd Greek and was on the Modern Side, and no end of a dab at French, except in form, when he was always dreaming about something else. He was so fanciful that whatever he read about he wanted to do. He got into trouble for spotting a concealed treasure in the Doctor's garden, which had been within the walls of the old abbey. He got out at night with a measuring-cord and a spade, and took bearings from a carving of a monk's head on the wall, and dug no end of a hole in a rose-plot, which he could not get filled up before it was spotted. Old Guy Fawkes called it a wanton outrage, not understanding Bags's explanation, which he offered in writing, after the flogging.

When he was quite a kid he bolted, having an idea of seizing a desert island off the west coast of Scotland. But he came back, after being two days in the woods, and lurked for nearly a week in the trunk-room, while the country was searched in vain; and no wonder! The fellows fed Bags with sandwiches and pork-pies, his idea being to wait till the holidays and get off, disguised, in the crowd, expecting to be received with joy by his people when they had chucked all hope. But he was betrayed by the knife-boy, who was in the know, and a jolly row there was, many of us being in it for keeping it dark. However, it was larks, and Bags being so very young, they did not give him the chuck.

So you see that Bags was not very responsible. You may wonder that he took to cricket, which is a decent game, whatever Kipling may say, he hardly being able to see the stumps from the other end of the pitch, so they tell me. But Bags's ambition to be a cricketer, like most things he did, came from reading a book, and a ripping one, called *Peter Steel, Cricketer*. He was

encouraged by a master that was rather a friend of his, and said that now Bags was in a good honest way, and would make an Englishman after all. But that was not what came of it. And I will say for Bags that he would not really have hurt a fly; and once had a fight (in which he got awfully licked) for interfering with a fellow who was catapulting at an old woman's cat up a tree. However, the cat got off in the row.

I have put in all this that you may not think Bags a common or garden sort of chap, who may be a pretty bad sweep, but would certainly never have dreamed of such a really awful thing as Bags's plot would have been if he had stuck to it.

Bags was no end sick about Cats's interference with his chance for his colours, as I was saying. He was mugging, if you will believe me, for a history essay on Catherine de Medicine (or some such name), and he hit on a lot of French novels by a cove called Dumas, that he said were decent, and all about Catherine. He told me bits out of them, and I am bound to say they were not bad, for a Frenchman, but that might be Bags's way of telling them. He was a white-faced chap, some kind of nigger blood in him, as I have said, with a lot of rumpled black hair, and big, short-sighted eyes, the colour of rusty ink, if you understand me. His eyes would get as big as saucers while he was spinning his yarns, and he rumpled his hair back, till he was awful to look at.

Now, that you may understand this yarn, Cats had a trick, when he ran up to the stumps to bowl, of licking the fingers of his left hand, he being a left-hander. He had seen a professional do it, and he thought it put more work on the ball, his fingers being wet in the way I have mentioned, and sticky.

I had told Bags that I thought this a beastly trick, and dangerous too, as it might give Cats consumption. Being in the Stinks division, and rather keen on it, I knew that some consumptive johnnie might have used the ball in the same way as Cats did, licking his fingers, and so Cats might get Neumococcus, which is the scientific little beast that gives you consumption. Bags said that Cats was a jealous brute, and he did not care how soon he got Neumococcus. I would have told Cats about it, myself, but, being on the Classical Side, he looked down on a fellow who can't do Greek verses; and he said that science was all swipes, not fit for an English gentleman, and should be left to Germans. Which is all very well, but nature makes fellows different, and, not having a head for Greek, I think myself very

well out of that beastly grind ; which is why foreigners lick us at trade, as my father says, and he is in Parliament.

Some days after I had told Bags about the Neumocockus, he, being in my study, was reading away at his French novel, not even using a dictionary. I saw him get awfully keen and excited, wriggling about with his head down over the pages.

'What's the lark?' I asked, but he never answered till he had finished the chapter, and then he laid the book down, and gave a great sigh. Then he sat staring at nothing.

After a bit, he told me what he had been reading. It seems that old Catherine, in the story, wanted to poison some cove : she often did, mostly with a scented handkerchief, or a pair of gloves, or a rose that she had doctored. I knew that, and I had told Bags that it was all rot ; there being no poisons capable of doing the trick in that way, especially in Catherine's time, when little progress in Stinks had been made. He said they might have known a lot of dodges that we have lost the hang of. But that was all skittles.

'Is it likely that with so many chemical fellows going about, all as jealous as girls——'

'Or bowlers,' said Bags.

'Is it likely they would not poison each other if they could do it with a rose and never be spotted? Why, they would put the stuff in each other's hat, hanging up in the hall at their club. Take my word for it, Bags,' I said, 'the game can't be played. Besides, they really had nothing in old Catherine's time better than arsenic, and had not enough analysis to spot *that*, when a fellow was poisoned ; a thing any kid can do now.'

'Sherlock Holmes was a nailer at analysis,' said Bags.

However perhaps I have got the story rather mixed, for this conversation occurred some days before Bags came to the chapter that excited him so.

In that part, which he now began to tell me about, old Catherine lay for her victim in a new way, variety being charming and expense no object. It was an enemy of hers who could read and write—which was not very common then, I dare say—and he collected old books as a Christian collects stamps or birds' eggs. They were Papists then ; and besides, if you think of it, there were no stamps to collect, before Rowland Hill, to whom the country owes so much for inventing them. See our last General Information paper.

Well, Catherine got hold of an old book on hunting, full of pictures, just what her enemy liked. She always had pretended to be good friends with him, being about as leary as they make them, and the daughter of a banking firm in Florence, fearfully rich. So she got her book, and then she poisoned all the pages, and gummed them a bit, to make them rather sticky. So she reckoned that when she had given her enemy the book, in a most awfully swagger binding, he would lick his fingers to help him to turn over the leaves, and then the poison would get into his system, and do for him.

This was all very well, but Catherine somehow left the book lying about. In came her son, who was king of France (she being the widow of the last king but one, who had married her for her money, a low thing to do, in my opinion). I don't remember the number of the reigning king, he was a Charles of sorts, and I think of that lot he went in eighth wicket down—quite one of the tail, anyhow. He was the sportsman who potted the Protestants out of his window, with a duck gun, in Stanley Weyman: so Bags told me.

Anyway, in the story, the king took up the poisoned book and began reading it, he being awfully keen on hunting; and, as the leaves were sticky, he did just as Catherine expected her enemy to do. Then, when he had read enough, he threw the book on the floor, and began to play with one of several pups he had in the room. It did not say the breed. Well, he looked up, and found that another pup had been worrying the pages of the book, as pups always do. One of Bags's had eaten his Liddell & Scott, at home, and Bags had to pay for a new copy out of a tip he had got from an awfully coiny uncle. The king looked round for something handy to shy at the beast, when it gave a yelp of pain, rolled over on the floor, biting and crying in most awful agony, foaming at the mouth like anything. Presently the poor little beggar stretched out its legs and skipped; which put the king in a horrid funk. He knew his mother's ways, and saw that, if the pup died after eating a book of hers, the odds were that she had been poisoning the book. Then the king felt as if a knife went through him, and then another knife, and he scooted off, the novel said, to his mother, and told her that she had regularly gone and done it this time. And he said he supposed it was because she had always preferred his younger brother, who was a regular rotter, and at that time was king of Poland, I don't know how. And she told him that it was all an accident, and begged him to

keep quiet about it, and not let it get into the papers, for the credit of the family. She being his mother, he could not very well have her hanged, so he did not tell, but sat tight, and presently he skipped, and that was the end of the chapter.

It was a decent yarn, the way Bags told it, and a sell for old Catherine and very vexatious.

'Do you think that trick is ever done now?' Bags asked me.

'No good,' said I. 'They would analyse the dead johnnie, and the book, and the arsenic would be found all right, and then the poisoner would jolly well get hanged.'

'But can all poisons be spotted like that?' says Bags.

'Some vegetable alkaloids might pull through without being caught, I dare say,' I said.

Now things were going ill with old Bags. Cats kept jawing to Bull, and a week before the M.C.C. match, Bull gave young Prettyman his colours, and the eleven was full up. Prettyman was a pal of Cats's, and imitated his bowling in what Bags called a slavish manner. He imitated Braund, himself, while Cats based himself on Hargreave, being a left-hander, as I think I said before.

I was present when a fellow came and told Bags that he had got the sack. He turned positively green, but said that he wished Prettyman luck, and he went and shook hands with him, in what the fellows thought a decent way. Then he walked into the school library.

Later I went in, for I was uneasy about Bags, knowing what a rum chap he was. He was sitting alone, crouched up over a book, and I saw it was Taylor on *Toxicology*, which is all about poisons, and rather ripping, about the murders.

He called to me, and said, 'Look here, I want to know how that poisoned book trick was done, but I can't make head or tail of the stuff. How do you make vegetable alky, what do you call it? Can you buy it at the druggist's?'

'Not likely,' said I; 'what do you want it for?'

'Only to try the experiment on a pup I keep at Stables's place in the town'—Stables being a town boy.

'If it comes off, or even if it does not, I'll ram it into my history essay on Catherine, and get a heap of marks,' said Bags.

'Rather rough on the pup,' I said.

'The poor brute is dying of distemper,' said Bags.

'Then the experiment won't be crucial, if it dies.'

'What's crucial?' asked Bags.

'Why, if the pup dies, it may be of distemper, not of your vegetable alkaloid, don't you see?'

'But I'm not such a juggins as to tell examiners that the beast had distemper,' said Bags.

'Tell them that you tried it on, in the interests of science, without making the experiment,' I said.

'That would be a crammer, and besides,' said Bags, 'they might ask questions.'

'They *might*!' I answered, 'and, anyway, you would get into an awful hole for keeping a dog in the town.'

Bags shut up, and began to walk up and down the room. Presently he came to me, where I was sitting on a desk, and said, 'Rags, old cock' (my beastly Christian name is Reginald, so they call me Rags), 'can you brew this alky stuff? I know you are a nailer at Stinks.'

I was now, you understand, tied up with a regular curly one. I don't suppose any fellow was ever in this kind of hole before, out of a book, Bags being my pal. If I said that I could not brew the stuff, Bags would probably get at it somehow from London, if it cost him a fiver. And I guessed jolly well that he did not want the poison for a pup or a book. I dare say you see what he wanted it for: if you don't you may wait and find out; anyway I knew. I spotted Bags's game from the first go off. But, if I said I could brew the stuff on my own, I told a lie, and that is what I have always barred ever since, when an innocent kid, I thought I had invented the art of lying, all on my own, and tried one on my governor. Some explanations passed, and really I have never told a lie since.

So here I was. If I said I could not mix the poison out of simples (which was true), Bags would get at it, for his uncle had just tipped him a fiver for his bowling, and he could easily hear of a starving apothecary, same as in Shakespeare, that we had for a holiday task (it was rather decent), that was not particular. The only way to prevent the most awful consequences was to tell a lie, a good one, and say that I would brew what he wanted, for Bags. Of course you may say if you know nothing about it, or are a woman, that I should have gone and told old Guy Fawkes, the headmaster. But any person of sense knows that that was impossible. So I made up my mind: it takes a long time to write, but I made up my mind quick enough. I told a lie, a good one, and stuck to it. 'Of course I can brew the stuff,' I said. And I thought of adding that Smith, the chemistry master,

had just put us up to the dodge, but Bags might have asked other fellows on the science side and spotted me.

'I worried it out of that rotter of a book,' I said, pointing to Taylor's book on poisons, which I then returned to its shelf. 'But it costs four pound ten for materials,' I added, so as to nail Bags's money, and prevent him from buying the stuff.

'Of course you only want it for the experiment on the puppy?' I asked, and Bags said:

'Yes, on the confounded puppy.'

(I put 'confounded,' but Bags used a word not generally printed.)

'And you only want to put the poison on a book to see if the pup will eat it and die of it? You are sure you mean to poison a book, and nothing else?'

'Of course I do mean to put the poison on a book and nothing else,' said Bags. 'If I wanted to poison any fellow here, a book is the last thing I'd put the poison on. They don't trouble books much here, and that shows you how safe the experiment is. Nobody here is in any danger from a poisoned book, except my pup, poor little sinner, because he does not know any better than to devour books.'

Bags said this so seriously, and it was such a good argument, that anybody but me might have believed him. I didn't of course; it was not a book that Bags was after poisoning.

You see I had now told I don't know how many lies, but I hope they won't count—I being in such a hole—and I had made Bags tell several: but he, being so deep in crime already, and a murderer in his heart, perhaps that does not matter much. Anyhow, he said that I was a brick, whereas, from reading Sherlock Holmes, I think I was jolly well an accessory before the fact. Anyway, I promised, and he gave me the four pound ten, which I wrapped in a paper marked, 'Bags's tin, on deposit,' and locked in my box.

Well, I swotted away, out of school time, in the laboratory, and Bags asked me if I wore a glass mask while I worked, which was a notion he got out of a poem by a cove called Browning. And I told him another: I said that a better dodge had been invented to prevent chemists from poisoning themselves. And the day before the match I gave Bags some stuff in a bottle, marked, 'For External Application Only,' and told him it was what he wanted—but it wasn't. And I sat tight.

Some poet says, 'What a tangled web we weave, when first

we practise to deceive,' and, for a poet, he came pretty near the bull's-eye. This was the first time *I* had practised to deceive, and a nice tangle I had made of it. And Bags thought he had deceived *me*, about the book and the pup, but I was not born yesterday.

On the morning of the M.C.C. match, a black, muggy, threatening morning it was, young Prettyman woke, and found he had a rash all over him, and, like a fool, he told somebody, who told the matron, who told old Guy Fawkes, who sent for the Doctor; and the rash being scarlet fever, the Doctor would not let Prettyman play. And he blubbed, and, next term, he licked the fellow who had let it out about the rash. Bull had now no choice, he gave Bags his colours. He was to be change bowler. But he was still set on revenge.

The way he worked it was very cunning. We had lost the toss, and, while the fellows were throwing catches to each other with the new ball, before the innings began, Bags substituted for it another, that he had doctored with the stuff I gave him, and concealed about his person. Of course I did not know he had done this: he told me afterwards.

Well, the match began, in a beastly light, for thunder was coming up as black as your hat. Bull sent down the first over.

Bags was fielding short leg. He looked as white as a sheet, so that fellows noticed it, and set it down to nerves, but I knew better. I had my eye on Bags, and had found rather a neat way of interfering if he played the fool. A fellow had dropped a yellow telegraph envelope—his brother had wired to him that he was through Pass Mods (his third shot)—and I collared the envelope, so that I could wave it, and rush on the ground, as if it was something awfully important. Well, off Bull's third ball, one of the other side, in trying to make Ranji's stroke to leg, put up the ball into Bags's hands. You could have caught it in your mouth. But Bags made a kind of blind rush, and it went over his head—he never even touched it. They ran one, and everybody laughed, except Bull. 'The rest of the over was uneventful,' as the cricket reports say.

Then Cats took the ball at the other end, but before you could say 'Knife,' Bags had rushed at him, and tried to take away the ball. He could not live up to his notion, do you see, and was determined to save Cats from what he thought was a poisoned ball. But, of course, everybody thought Bags had gone clean mad, and was going to put himself on to bowl by force. He

was not a strong fellow, and Cats was, but he got the ball out of Cats's hand, before anybody could stop him.

At this awful moment, while all the field ran up, I had sprinted across the ground, waving the telegraph envelope. I had just time to whisper to Bags, 'Bags, you fool, there's nothing on the ball but liquid shaving soap,' when he did what I once saw a girl do who was cut over when fielding in a girls' school match. He fell down in a dead faint into the arms of Bull, who had rushed up to interfere. At the same moment there was a flash of lightning, fit to blind you, a crash of thunder, the rain came down like a million shower baths, and everybody scooted to the pavilion, leaving the ball on the ground, where the rain washed all the liquid shaving soap off it.

The umpires carried old Bags into the pavy, and a doctor was sent for. He looked jolly glum: and Bags was taken to the Sanatorium, where nobody was allowed to speak to him.

Bull took me into a corner, and asked me what I had whispered to Bags.

I was in a hole, and rather in a funk, Bull never having spoken to me before.

'Bull,' I said, 'you are a gentleman.'

'I hope so,' said Bull, grinning.

'Well, if Bags gets better, and is to stay on, I'll tell you what I said to him.'

'It was something about shaving soap,' said Bull, 'and why should that make him faint?'

'I'll tell you, and let you do what you think right, if Bags gets better and stays on. And, anyway, I'll tell the Doctor. But nobody except me knows why Bags fainted: he's rather cracked, that's a fact. But if the story gets about it won't be pleasant: it is bad enough already.'

'It is jolly like morbus comitialis,' said Bull; and I looked it up in the Latin dictionary. It is a disease that makes a fellow do rum things and fall down; and the doctor—the medical one—gave it at that afterwards.

Bull thought for a minute and pulled his moustache, which he has.

'Honour bright; you'll tell the Doctor?' he said.

'Yes; I will, to-night,' I said.

'All right; I won't ask you another question,' said Bull; and then he said, 'You are rather a decent sort of chap.' And he shook hands with me.

The match was abandoned on account of the rain, which was a sell for everyone but Prettyman, who could not play anyway, and did not seem much disappointed.

Bags was awfully ill, and they did not know if he would live. I had to tell the Doctor, of course, and Bags, who was laid up for most of the holidays, did not come back. The Doctor said he was not fit for public-school life; and right he was. But I always put it down to Bags's nigger great-grandmother, and him always play-acting what he had read in books. When it came to the scratch, you see, Bags gave his plot the chuck.

Egyptian Irrigation Works.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, Egypt was a country on the verge of financial ruin, with an annual expenditure exceeding its revenue, and, in spite of an overtaxed population, unable to pay the interest on its National Debt. Now it is one of the best-governed States in the world, with a contented population and a revenue which increases in spite of decreased taxation, and with a regular credit balance. In this reformation British administrators have taken a leading part, and one of the leading factors in their administration has been the management and extension of the great Irrigation Works on which the agriculture of Egypt entirely depends.

The history of our position in Egypt is briefly this. In 1878, misgovernment and extravagance had brought the finances of the country into such a state that it was feared money would not be forthcoming to pay the interest on the National Debt, which then amounted to about 100,000,000*l.*, mostly borrowed in England and France. An International Commission was therefore appointed—Major Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) being one of its members—to investigate the financial condition of the country. On the recommendation of this Commission the Khedive surrendered to the country all the lands, amounting to about 1,000,000 acres, or nearly one-fifth of the cultivated area of Egypt, which he had appropriated during his reign. There followed on this reform the substitution of a responsible Ministry for the personal government of the Khedive. The first Ministry contained an English Minister of Finance and a French Minister of Public Works. Their recommendations, however, were not acceptable to the Khedive, and their tenure of office was short. Matters then went from bad to worse, and ended, in 1879, in the deposition of Ismail and the accession of his son Tewfik to the Khedivate, and the establishment of the ‘Dual Control,’ under which the French and English Governments appointed respectively M. de Blignières

and Major Baring to direct the administration of the country. Very little progress had, however, been made before the rebellion of Arabi Pasha in 1882 brought about a difference of opinion between the two controlling Powers. France withdrew from her share in the control, and the suppression of the revolt and the work of further reform were left in British hands.

It was early seen that—given just and economical government—the prosperity of Egypt depended on agriculture, and its agriculture depended on irrigation. And so it was decided that, when the very necessary reform of lessening the burden of taxation on the oppressed peasantry had been accomplished, any spare funds available should be devoted mainly to irrigation and drainage.

Egypt proper extends southwards from the Mediterranean to the 22nd parallel of north latitude, which crosses the Nile valley near Wady Halfa, and westwards from the Red Sea to a more or less arbitrary line some 200 to 300 miles west of the Nile. Only a very small proportion of this is culturable, but such as is, being favoured with almost constant sunshine, only requires a well-regulated perennial water-supply to justify its being classed amongst the most fertile land in the world. The cultivated portion is divided into Upper and Lower Egypt. Upper Egypt is a tract some 500 miles long, lying mostly on the west side of the Nile between Cairo and Assuan. At its northern end it has a width of eight miles, increasing at Beni Suef to fourteen miles, reduced again to five miles at Assiout, and before Assuan is reached the desert in many places closes up to the river on both sides. It includes the Fayum, a fertile district on the west side of the Nile, and separated from the Nile valley by a low range of hills, with a convenient gap through which the irrigation canal passes. The cultivated area of Upper Egypt is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ million acres. Lower Egypt comprises the Delta—a triangle of about 100 miles a side, lying between Alexandria, Port Said, and Cairo, and containing an area of about three million acres.

Rainfall in Egypt is a negligible quantity, except on the Mediterranean seaboard: the average yearly fall at Alexandria is about eight inches and at Cairo $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch, while Upper Egypt is practically rainless. The Nile has therefore to be looked to for the supply of water to about $5\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, with a population of about ten million people.

In point of length and drainage area the Nile is one of the largest rivers of the world. In the lower part of its course, however, it passes through a rainless region, and consequently receives

no tributaries, and as its waters are largely used for irrigation, and are also subject to great evaporation, it presents the unusual phenomenon of a river decreasing in volume as it nears the sea. The mean flood discharge at Assuan amounts to 864 million cubic metres¹ a day, and at Cairo to 657 million. It is fed from tropical regions which are subject to regular wet and dry seasons, and so it happens that it has a regular rise and fall. At Cairo it is low water in June; the water rises rapidly till September, and then remains almost stationary till the middle of October, when it commences to fall. The mean range, or difference in level between mean low water and mean high water, is about 23 feet at Cairo and 26 feet at Assuan. During the flood season the Nile waters are above the level of the land and are kept out by extensive banks. At low water the Nile is below the level of the land, and means have therefore to be taken to raise the water first into the irrigation canals, and often from them by pumping machinery, on to the land.

The main factors of the irrigation problem consequently are—The quantity of water required; the flow of the Nile; and the varying differences in level of the river and the land.

The quantity of water required depends upon the crops grown, and as these are liable to variation no very exact determination can be made. The staple crops are now cotton in summer and wheat in winter. In 1901 cotton to the value of 17,000,000*l.* was produced, and when it is remembered that the annual expenditure of the country amounts to about 11,000,000*l.*, it will easily be understood what an important matter the irrigation of this one crop alone is to Egyptian finances. Besides cotton and wheat, sugar, rice, maize (the food of the people), indigo, and onions are also grown.

From measurements of the water passing down the canals supplying a district of known area, it has been found that the summer crops require about 27 cubic metres of water per acre per day: this is equal to 945 cubic feet, or about a quarter of an inch spread over the whole area. In India it is usual to allow a third of an inch per day for rice and an eighth of an inch for common grain. It must be borne in mind that the land is not always under cultivation, but against this must be set the great evaporation in a country of almost cloudless skies. Probably we shall not be far wrong if we conclude that the daily quantity required lies somewhere between an eighth and a quarter of an inch of water on the whole of the cultivated area, and it must not be

¹ In Egyptian engineering the metric system is in general use: a cubic metre is equal to 35½ cubic feet, or 220 gallons

forgotten that beyond the cultivated area lie at least 1,000,000 acres which could be cultivated if only a water-supply was available. Now, an eighth of an inch of water on $5\frac{1}{2}$ million acres is equal to 2500 million cubic feet, or 70 million cubic metres. The mean low-water discharge of the Nile at Assuan is given by Sir W. Willcocks in his work on *Egyptian Irrigation* at 35 million cubic metres per day, and the mean flood discharge at 864 million cubic metres. So it was evident that though the discharge at low water was insufficient, the flood discharge was more than enough, and the question that called for solution was the provision of means for storing this surplus.

It is for this purpose that the Great Dam at Assuan has been built. It consists of a masonry wall built across the Nile at the head of the First Cataract, 600 miles from the sea: the wall or dam is a mile and a quarter long, 130 feet deep from the top to the deepest part of the foundation, 81 feet wide in the widest part, and 23 feet at the top: it is built of granite set in cement mortar, and contains about 540,000 cubic metres of masonry. The dam is pierced by 140 sluices of 150 square feet area and forty of 75 square feet. The sluices are closed by steel gates; a winch is fixed on the dam top above each sluice, and each gate can be raised or lowered by hand, the excessive friction caused by the great 'head' of water being counteracted by working the gates on free rollers suspended in frames on the system designed by the late Mr. F. G. Stoney. At the west end of the dam is a navigation lock 31 feet wide, by means of which, and with the help of another lock now in course of construction at the lower end of the cataract, the Nile steamers can pass the dam and cataract at all times of the year. The 'top-water-level' of the reservoir formed by the dam is about 340 feet above sea level, and by its means the Nile between Assuan and Wady Halfa is transformed into a lake with a capacity of 1065 million cubic metres, or about seventy times the capacity of the new Staines reservoir on the Thames. No great engineering difficulties were encountered in the building of the Assuan Dam. The principal novelty in its design consisted in the discharge of the entire flood-waters of the Nile through the sluices already described instead of over a 'waste-weir' at the side of or over the top of the dam. This divergence from the usual practice was necessitated by the peculiar conditions prevailing in the Nile. During the flood season, from July to October, the water carries so much mud in suspension that a still-water reservoir would in a few years be seriously diminished in capacity. By means of the

sluices, however, the flood-water will be given a free passage, and in November, when the water has become clearer, the sluices will be shut down and the water impounded for use in the following summer.

The most difficult question in connection with the reservoir lay, not with the engineers, but with the Egyptian Government, who had to decide between the rival claims of agriculture and archæology. In the original scheme it was contemplated to build a dam which would have raised the water-level to a height of 26 feet above the level of the reservoir as actually carried out. This would have submerged the celebrated temples of Philæ, which are situated on an island only a few miles to the south of the dam. This was strongly opposed by the archæologists, and as a compromise the dam was finished to the lower height, thus reducing the storage capacity by more than one-half. Even at this level the reservoir when full rises to a height of from 6 to 12 feet above the floors of most of the temples, and extensive underpinning operations have been found necessary to ensure the safety of the buildings.

The dam was designed by Mr. Willcocks: it was commenced in 1898 and completed in 1902, the resident engineer during most of that period being Mr. Maurice Fitzmaurice, now engineer to the London County Council. Messrs. John Aird & Co. were the contractors. The work has cost about 2,500,000*l.* It has already proved of great benefit to Egypt, but cannot be said to settle the reservoir question, and before many years are over we shall probably hear of another large reservoir building on the Nile—unless the archæological scruples can be overcome and the Assuan dam raised. Perhaps in a future scheme means may be devised to utilise the vast water-power now running to waste for the purpose of supplying drinking-water to the towns of Egypt. Hydraulic motors might pump the comparatively pure water of the reservoir into a 500-mile steel main laid down the Nile valley, to replace the present cholera-breeding system of taking the water from the lower reaches of the Nile, or the so-called ‘sweet-water’ canals.

The storage of the Nile water is only part of the work of the irrigation engineer: he has also to arrange an economical system of raising the water from the river into the large irrigation canals, and for its equable distribution. For this object numerous regulators or barrages have been built, the principal of which are the Delta, Zifta, and Assiout Barrages.

The Delta Barrage, at the head of the Delta, about fifteen miles below Cairo, is the earliest modern irrigation work of any importance. As originally built, it consisted of two brick bridges, one across the Rosetta and the other across the Damietta branch of the Nile. The former had sixty-one openings 16 feet 5 inches wide and two 18 feet wide; the latter seventy-one of the smaller openings and two of the larger, the Nile branches at this spot being respectively 1500 and 1700 feet wide. Each barrage had also a navigation lock. The object to be served by the barrage was the raising of the water-level on its upstream side a height of 15 feet, to allow of its free discharge into the Delta irrigation canals: this was to be done by means of iron gates opening and closing automatically. However, on the completion of the work in 1861 the closing of the gates and consequent raising of the upstream water-level was found to cause such serious subsidence and cracking of the structure that the work was abandoned as a failure. In 1883, the year after the commencement of the British occupation, the Egyptian Government obtained the aid of Colonel Scott Moncrieff, an experienced irrigation engineer from India, to advise them on irrigation matters, and to him and his assistants and successors Egypt owes its present system of irrigation. Colonel Scott Moncrieff immediately took steps to restore the barrage: the fault had lain mainly in bad foundations—the work had been built on the ordinary alluvial deposit of the Delta, no hard foundation being available at any reasonable depth. Instead of carrying down deep foundations, a dangerous and costly operation in such ground, it was decided that the same purpose would be served by spreading out the foundation to form a watertight apron of such a width that the distance any percolating water would have to travel would be sufficiently great to check its velocity and prevent its carrying away any of the sand and mud from below the work. This system has been carried out with considerable success, and in 1898 a head of water of 14 feet was maintained on the barrage where not more than 5 feet had been ventured before.

For regulating the water-level the old inefficient gear has been discarded, and three wrought-iron gates provided to each opening. These gates run in cast-iron grooves like the sashes of a window; they are raised or lowered by winches (three to each barrage) travelling on continuous rails so that they can be brought to action over any opening.

It was found during the restoration that much of the original work had been badly scamped, and to ensure its safety it was

decided to force Portland cement grout into the piers and foundations. For this purpose $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles of holes were 'jumped' in the brickwork of the piers, and upwards of 6000 barrels of cement poured down the holes in the form of grout, insuring perfect solidity wherever the grout could penetrate.

Though these repairs had attained their object and enabled the water to be raised in summer to the level originally contemplated, still the structure being a patchwork, and serious defects in workmanship having been discovered during the progress of repairs, it was considered to lie on the borderland between safety and danger. It was consequently decided to build solid weirs across the river below each barrage in order to hold up the water below the gates and so reduce the pressure upon them. In studying this project it was found that a further advantage could be gained beyond that of merely securing the safety of the barrage. The height to which the water was maintained by the barrage, though that originally contemplated, did not serve all the purposes of irrigation: a higher level still was desirable. It was found that with the help of the proposed weirs the gates on the barrage might be increased in height without the pressure upon them being increased. The weirs were consequently built: they consist of masonry walls 10 feet wide, rising 10 feet above the bed of the river and extending to 20 feet below it. In constructing these walls a novel principle was employed. It is usual in such work to mix the materials forming the concrete—the stone, sand, and cement—together on dry ground and then to deposit the concrete so mixed in the foundation trench. In this case, however, the trench standing full of water, it was thought that equally good work could be done more expeditiously by first filling in the rubble, broken stone and pebbles, and then filling up the interstices by cement grout poured into pipes carried through the mass of rubble and stone. Both the weirs were built in this way, and the river bed for about 150 feet downstream was protected by stone pitching, with a small cross wall about 100 feet below the main wall.

The weirs were completed in 1901, and it is now found that by their help the level of the Nile at this point can with safety be raised 20 feet, 10 feet being retained by the gates at the barrage and 10 feet by the weirs.

The Zifta Barrage, which has only been completed within the last few months, at a cost of about 230,000*l.*, is a supplement to the Delta Barrage, and is built across the Damietta branch of the

Nile, about half way between Cairo and the sea. It is designed to hold up 13 feet of water, and consists of a masonry bridge with fifty spans of 16 feet 5 inches each, closed by iron gates raised by winches in a similar manner to those at the Delta Barrage. A navigation lock is provided 214 feet long and 40 feet wide. The foundation consists of a platform of masonry and concrete 100 feet wide, extending the full width of the river and from 8 to 10 feet thick, with two rows of cast-iron 'sheet piles' driven into the alluvial deposit on which the foundation platform rests. These platform foundations are generally adopted throughout Egypt now, and in their construction another engineering novelty is to be found: this consists of what is called an 'inverted filter.' In these comparatively shallow foundations on porous soil it was not supposed that absolute watertightness could be obtained; there was sure to be some percolation underneath the masonry, but this was immaterial provided the water in passing under the masonry did not take away with it the sand and soil on which the structure was built. This object has been ensured by a bed of ordinary filtering material running across the river at the lower end of the foundation platform. In an ordinary waterworks filter the sediment is taken from the water by passing it downwards through layers, first of fine sand, then coarser, then pebbles, broken stone, &c., but this filter-bed is upside down, the sand below and the broken stone, &c., above, and through this the water issues clear and free from sediment.

The Assiout Barrage is the principal regulator for Upper Egypt: it spans the Nile near the town of Assiout, about 330 miles below Assuan. The object of building a barrage at this spot was to augment the supply of the Ibrahimia Canal, which waters nearly the whole of Upper Egypt, and the barrage has consequently been built immediately below the intake to this canal. It consists of a masonry bridge of 111 spans of 5 metres or 16 feet 5 inches each, and a navigation lock 260 feet long and 52 feet wide. The bays are closed by iron doors similar to those at the Delta and Zifta: they hold up the water in summer a height of about 8 feet. The foundation has been designed on similar principles to those which guided the successful repairs to the Delta Barrage: it consists of a concrete and masonry platform about 10 feet thick and 87 feet wide, extending from bank to bank of the river. This platform was laid between two rows of cast-iron sheet piling, which extend 13 feet below the bottom of the concrete foundation.

The Assiout Barrage was included in Messrs. John Aird & Co.'s contract for the Assuan Dam, and was completed in 1902. Besides serving the purposes of irrigation, it forms a valuable connecting link between the east and west banks of the Nile, here about half a mile apart.

The above by no means exhausts what might be written on the irrigation works of Egypt. The country teems with works of interest to the engineer. Besides the regulators, escapes, and syphons to be found on all the larger canals, there are pumping engines dotted all over the country, from the primitive 'shadoof' to the latest centrifugal pump. These the Irrigation Department are endeavouring to supersede by carefully arranged regulators, but it is doubtful if they can be entirely dispensed with.

Enough has, it is hoped, been said to show that if British rule should cease to-morrow the country would be the lasting gainer by our twenty years' occupation.

LAWRENCE GIBBS.

Scholarship Howlers.

THERE have been articles with horrid examples on the howlers which are freely perpetrated in schools by children. But there are others. And *quis custodiet custodes?* There has been, very recently, an examination of pupil teachers for scholarships, and some of the results are wonderful. Not to put too fine a point on it, as Mr. Snagsby remarked, fearful and wonderful. Many of the questions were given to test not so much what could be crammed from a text-book as general information and general intelligence. If a man is to teach children to think it is necessary that he should first be able to perform the somewhat unusual operation of thinking for himself; and whether the candidates generally failed to accomplish this highly difficult feat I shall not say. But anyone who will take the trouble to read a few of the answers given can form his own opinion. By saying nothing as to my own, I preclude the risk of being contradicted. The paper of which I treat is called 'General Information.' It contains twelve questions, of which six only are to be answered. In the first question, among other points, is, 'Give the dimensions of a common brick.' One answer was, 'The dimensions of a common brick are clay, sand, and water.'

The second question is, 'What are the duties of (1) the Lord Chancellor; (2) an accountant; (3) an Excise officer; and (4) a veterinary surgeon?' One has heard criticisms directed against Lord Halsbury, but, no doubt, one answer will suffice to remove them. 'The Lord Chancellor pays the salaries of the domestics employed by the King out of his own salary.' On the second point, 'An accountant is the name of the man who serves at the bank by the counter. He crosses cheques and is next in position to the manager.' 'An Excise officer is to see that wines, &c., are diluted according to law.' On the fourth point there seem to be some strange ideas. 'A veterinary surgeon vaccinates

persons.' 'A veterinary surgeon is appointed by a public body, and attends wounds and amputations if necessary on a member of the public body which employs him.' Is this a pun? 'A veterinary surgeon is a surgeon who has a right to go to a place where his duty is required. Some surgeons have to be consulted at home, as they have no right to go out of doors.' Poor things!

The third question is, 'With what recent events are the following names connected, Pekin, Venice, Westminster Abbey?' 'At Pekin thousands of Legations were killed.' 'At Venice is the Vatican, an ancient temple.' 'Venice is a most important city in Italy. It was quite recently, amidst splendour and pomp, the scene of the crowning of the aged Pope of Rome.' 'Venice is famous for the recent Earl's Court Exhibition of Venice in London.' There must have been something to associate a late nonconformist divine with the Abbey, though for the life of me, I cannot think of any such thing. Yet one answer was that 'Dr. Parker was recently buried in Westminster Abbey,' and another was, 'The Abbey has lost by death its most eloquent preacher, Dr. Parker.' These examinees must have been non-conformists; so to avoid trouble it would be better to get them to amend their answers by deleting 'was' and 'has' and substituting 'should have been' and 'should have.' Another answer was that Sir Arthur Sullivan was recently buried in the Abbey. 'Westminster Abbey was built by Sir Christopher Wren.' Yet the most startling reply from the point of view of an educationist was certainly this, 'Westminster Abbey is where the English Parliament is held. There the Education Bill was recently passed.'

Question 4 is, 'What do you know about the water-supply and drainage, if any, of the place in which you live?' 'As to drainage, we have none, and I think we are very fortunate in this respect.' At first blush it seems that this examinee is following a foolish course and losing marks by, as the street boys say, 'trying to be funny.' But, really, I think the words 'if any' in the question have misled him, and he believes what he says. And I do not say he is wrong. You never get an epidemic from a total want of drainage.

The fifth question is, 'Give the names of six living Englishmen distinguished in science, art, or literature. Name the grounds of distinction in each case.' Science is a hard nut. But art is easy. They plumped for Police Constable Jones. As to literature, why, 'Canon Doyle is noted for the many works he has produced on

Scripture.' Is that c. and b., Sir Arthur? As to art, 'Sir Edward Poynter is a well-known drawing man. He designs for schools.' Now the origin of the last sentence is the cream of the joke. But it is so 'wrop in mist'ry' to the uninitiate that one in a thousand, and one only, will understand.

Question 9 is, 'Give the titles and authors of the books in which the following characters are introduced:—... Lancelot . . . ' Lancelot is in the *Mort d'Arthur*, which was written by Caxton.' And now comes an answer which would have saddened the heart of a humourist who hated to waste a good thing, for his parody has been taken for seriousness, and no other Lancelot has been known. 'Lancelot was a Yankee in the *Court of King Arthur*, by Mark Twain.'

The tenth question is, 'What institutions are connected with the following places—(1) Girton, (2) Kew, (3) Bisley, (4) The Oval, (5) Broadmoor?' There has been some inexplicable confusion between the first and the last. Surely it cannot be for a joke, but more than one have replied that Girton is a lunatic asylum. One has given it far more honour, and says, 'Girton is a famous college for training ladies. Our present Queen is a Girton girl.' Another says, 'Girton is a country residence near Cambridge.' 'Girton is a great golf centre. Mr. Balfour often plays there with other distinguished players.' 'Kew,' says the first answer to the next sub-question, 'is a college for naval surgeons.' Another candidate, making an obvious confusion, says, 'Kew is the largest college in the world. It is in Russia.' To go to the last sub-question—I skip because I want to keep the tit-bit for the last—'Broadmoor is an important race meeting and grouse shooting.' 'The Oval is the property of the Gentleman Players.' Now, Mr. V. Crawford, what about this? Perhaps, as you have left Surrey, you may be free to express an opinion. But, in my poor judgment, this is the very best, 'THE OVAL IS WHERE THE LORDS PLAY.'

G. STANLEY ELLIS.

At the Sign of the Ship.

WHY cannot Mr. Chamberlain 'be aisy'? This is no place for politics, but the distressing worry about 'fiscal policy' is not politics; it is something much worse, namely metachrematistics. Just as metaphysics are things on the off side of physics, and as 'metetherial' is somewhat beyond and behind ether, so metachrematistics are in the chartless *hinterland* of political economy. Now, political economy is one of those things which no fellow understands, so we may guess how totally incomprehensible metachrematistics must be. The higher mathematics are not on the same level of abstruseness, and the topics discussed in *Mind*, that cheerful periodical, are but as double acrostics, or the Encyclopædia competition, compared with this odious problem of fiscal policy. Meanwhile, the country is giving its opinion about metachrematistics, and every casual human being is voluble and confident on a theme manifestly not understood by professors who occupy chairs of metachrematistics in the Universities. Labourers are invited to vote; and ladies ask you the impossible conundrum: 'What do you think of fiscal policy?' They know what they think, bless them, and are ready to twitter about metachrematistics by the hour. Meanwhile, the sage, like Socrates, knows that he knows nothing whatever concerning this matter. Having read speeches by F.P.'s and Anti-F.P.'s, I learn that we are certain to lose the colonies in either case—that is, whether we adopt Mr. Chamberlain's plan (whatever it may be) or whether we don't. I am rather sorry for the colonies, because if we lose them, somebody else will take them, and find them rather a handful.

* * *

Let us examine a special case in political economy. Up to 1600 or so, my beloved country imported her golf balls from Holland. Probably they were made of wood, but that is unessential. The Dutchman, in exchange, received, I presume, red

herrings, for I know not what else my country had to give, as to export ready money, or coal, or wool, or leather, was forbidden. In these conditions of fiscal policy, James VI. put a prohibitive impost on Dutch golf balls. What was the consequence? Scotland made her own golf balls, kept her red herrings at home, and established the golf-ball making industry. Meanwhile, Holland lost, not only her ball-making industry but the game of golf itself. The Scots player, to be sure, had to pay half a crown for a ball, but he did so in a spirit of patriotic self-denial. Now, on the other hand, we admit Haskell and other American golf balls free, and the country is going, as Mr. Mantalini said, 'to the demnition bow-wows.' This case may be recommended to the consideration of candidates for the next Parliament. On the whole, fiscal politics are very like systems for breaking the bank at Monte Carlo. They never hold water all round, 'or, at least, not good water,' as the Baboo barrister said; there is always one possible run of bad luck that beats them, and that run invariably occurs. At all events, one fact is certain. A great number of persons are talking furiously about a question which they do not understand. The Big Loaf cry must settle the matter, though where is the use of a big loaf if you have no money to pay for the same? Questions are settled by cries; politicians, like the baby in *In Memoriam*, 'have no language but a cry.' A conscientious and sceptical statesman, who knows that he does not know, and maintains an attitude of sweet reasonableness, does not command the confidence of the public.

* * *

These impartial and luminous reflections are the result of wet weather in a lovely part of the West Highlands. The weather also provoked the following beautiful but melancholy poem.

TO FIONA.

From the damp shieling on the draggled Island
Mountains divide you, and no end of seas.
But, though your heart is genuinely Highland,
Still, you're in luck to be away from these!

Far from the mountains where the thirsty crofter
Early and eager registers his vote,
Still drinking harder as the day grows 'softer,'
Fiona, from these thou art happily remote.

Far from the hostels where the baffled tripper
 Watches the window and contemplates the rain,
 Far from the drenched decks where the oilskinned skipper
 Herds the unhappy clients of Macbrayne.

Far from the caves where unfortunate Prince Charlie
 Served as the pasture of the eager midge,
 Fiona, methinks that, after dining early,
 Thou art enjoying the delights of bridge.

Yes, Fiona dear, the Highlands, from a distance,
 Seem a seductive subject for a lay,
 But, when it rains with the usual persistence,
 Fiona, perhaps you would rather stop away.

* * *

An interesting 'Highland and Jacobite exhibition' has been held at Inverness. The catalogue contains examples of antiquarian innocence not easily paralleled. Thus 'King James V. snuffbox, 1534, bearing the inscription *Nemo me impune lacessit*.' We are not told the name of the chief to whom a snuffbox of 1534 was given, but the present owner must have been surprised by this astonishing history of the jewel. To be sure, James V: *may* have introduced snuff to Scotland many years before the Indian weed reached England, but some proof ought to be given that the grandfather of the author of the *Counterblast to Tobacco* used that herb. Montrose is said to have hated smoking, and to have been annoyed, while a prisoner, by the pipe of Major Weir, a warlock and worse. But perhaps the great Marquis snuffed, though he did not smoke; his snuffbox 'given to a Lovat' is in the collection. 'A glass tumbler out of which Prince Charles drank at Cranston, Midlothian, on his retreat from England in 1746,' is indeed a curiosity. The Prince, retreating from Carlisle, marched to Glasgow by way of Dumfries. How, then, did he find himself in Midlothian? Did he sleep at Gorthleck House on the night after Culloden? So the catalogue says, but I had thought that he rode to a much greater distance from that fatal field. Surgeon Lieut.-Col. A. K. Stewart, of Achnacone, exhibited some articles of very curious interest, and a miniature of Queen Mary, 'by Nicholas Thilliard, 1568,' must be a remarkably valuable possession. In 1568 the Queen entered into her English captivity. Did Nicholas Thilliard paint her in Loch Leven, or during her few days of freedom, before her defeat at Langside, or in the north of England

after she had cut her hair off? It is not usual to find an authentic portrait of the Queen after she left France for her own country. The beautiful ivory coffer, sold at the Magniac sale, is called 'Mary Queen of Scots ivory casket,' and said to have been sold in 1807 'with the nine letters it contained, written by Queen Mary.' What nine letters? There may arise a confusion of this much older object with the lost silver casket, and the lost letters as to Darnley's doom and the Queen's abduction. Doubtless it is not intended to aver that Cardinal York, till the day of his death, treasured fatal letters never seen after 1584, and that an ivory casket of '1299-1340' is the silver casket of about 1560. The wording of the entry, however, leaves a misty impression on this and other points. This ivory coffer, here called Queen Mary's Casket, is said to have been sold at Rome, 'with the nine letters it contained written by Queen Mary,' in 1807. 'They were ultimately handed to the late Queen Victoria for safe keeping.' It would be astonishing that while British, Continental, and American historians were disputing about the 'nine letters,' her late Majesty kept them safe, and, though she could have settled the problem in a few minutes, said nothing at all. No doubt the letters are still in safe keeping in the Royal Library. Really the rain and mist appear to have thrown their magic over this portion of the catalogue, where we may ask for more light on the bewildering statements. There is not much use in writing history if legend is to upset all that we had supposed to be firm-based on facts, whether as to the date of the introduction of snuff, or as to the famous 'nine letters.' Again, at what conceivable date was fashioned 'table cover worked for Prince Charles Edward by the ladies of his household at Versailles'? When had he a house, not to say a household, at Versailles, and how could ladies be part of the household of a bachelor? Tradition appears to have dominated history in the minds of several contributors to this very interesting exhibition, while sheer fancy is manifest in other entries.

* * *

Apart from the personal questions raised, the problem of copyright involved in a dispute as to Mrs. Ady's *Isabella d'Este* is interesting. Signor Luzio, director of the Royal Archives of Mantua, and Professor Renier, of Turin, complain, in *The Athenæum* of August 15, that *three-quarters* of Mrs. Ady's book on Isabella (a most interesting book) is theirs. She translates

the documents 'discovered and transcribed,' and (as I understand) published by them, 'and uses the results of our erudition, repeating citations from books which often she has not even seen. If she refers to us sometimes, it is only as an astute means of hiding from the reader the hundred other occasions on which she despoils us without mentioning the fact.' Other remarks of equal or greater severity follow. Mr. John Murray, as Mrs. Ady's publisher, replied that Mrs. Ady avowedly had translated many documents discovered and transcribed (and as I understand published) by the Italian *savants*. But she certainly acknowledges her debt of this kind in her book, and she was unaware, as I am unaware, that, by translating published documents, she transgressed any law of copyright. Other accusations Mr. Murray denied, asserting Mrs. Ady's independent labours as attested by her note-books. A compromise had been arranged, a sum of money had been accepted by the Italian authors; they had spontaneously offered to let the matter rest, and then they wrote to *The Athenæum*, as we have seen.

* * *

Leaving the question of the propriety of their proceedings on one side, we really do need to know how far we may blamelessly cite the published discoveries of others. Speaking as a layman, I am apt to think that the Italian historians would have taken nothing by an appeal to the law. As far as I understand the matter, if A in England gives years to studying unpublished MSS., and produces a book based on and including them, B, also in England, may abridge A's book, and quote such of A's fresh documents as he pleases, without infringing our law. B says he is much indebted to A, and B is perfectly safe, as far as I am informed. This may be hard on A, but this, I learn, is the state of the law. Now if A is an Italian, his pecuniary interests seem likely to suffer less from B's English book than A's interests suffer if A is an Englishman. Very few English people read history in Italian, very few Italians read Italian history in English. Between Mrs. Ady's English book and that of Messrs. Luzio and Renier in Italian there is, in a commercial sense, hardly any competition. A British jury would almost certainly take that view.

* * *

On the other hand, no person of honour or honesty, who has reflected on the subject, I think, is likely to make large use of

the labours, the incomplete labours too, of original students, without first asking their permission. To ask permission, then, first of all, is the way to have a conscience void of offence, and to escape the risk of an altercation. 'No good ever comes of a haltercation,' says the footman in *Pendennis*, or words to that effect. The question of the state of the law is delicate and difficult; moreover, men of letters, as a rule, do not desire to sail near the wind of the law. But doubtless many authors have always taken for granted, without much reflection, that documents, once unearthed and published by any student, become *publici juris*, like the cattle of the lowlands, whence, as the Highland chief said, 'every man takes his prey.' The more we think of this view of the case, the less, perhaps, we like it. I own that I do not like it at all. But it is a question of degree, of the 'how' and the 'how much,' and safety lies in asking permission.

Looking at the affair of Isabella d'Este from the side of the Italian *savants*, we see two gentlemen intending to write a life of that Princess, and publishing, at intervals, some of the results of their researches. They have prospected among great wastes of State Papers, probably at the time still uncatalogued and unarranged. They have deciphered letters in cipher, I dare say, a toilsome and delicate task. They have made copies, they have selected, and rejected, and fought with dates, and brought the papers into chronological series, always with their aim of making a biography of Isabella before them. And then an English lady produces an English life of their heroine, not based on the MSS. in their charge, but on the copies which they have printed, 'toiling sairly.' One can understand why they do not like it, though one cannot understand their proceedings, as described by Mr. Murray.

* * *

I have never visited Stratford-on-Avon, and I never mean to do so. According to the conscientious author of 'Musings without Method,' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Stratford-on-Avon is rotten with Shakespeare. He does not use these identical words, borrowed by me from an Irish lady in *All on the Irish Shore*—'this place is rotten with dogs.' But we learn that Stratford is already so blighted by a Shakespeare Museum, that a Free Andrew Library can make it no worse. A little street boy in the town offered to a friend of mine to 'tell her all about Shakespeare' for one penny. He was practising 'the dumping down

policy' on Mr. Sidney Lee, shamefully underselling that biographer. The very cabmen blab of Shakespeare. Yet it is not thought that the people of Stratford, or the American visitors, know the works of Shakespeare more minutely and extensively than the natives of Dumfries, and the bodies that visit the Mausoleum, know the works of Burns. Any inhabitants of Stratford who really admire Shakespeare must wish that his birthplace was as mysterious as everything else about him. Shakespeare did not care for advertisement, that is certain, and we can only hope that Aristotle was right when he thought that the affairs of this world touch the departed very little. Otherwise, beholding his birthplace, Shakespeare must feel rather uncomfortable. The town is 'converted, by the poet's indiscreet admirers, to a kind of American circus,' so we are informed.

* * *

In her recent book *Celebrities and Myself*, Miss Corkran tells us that she occupied a room in a house, and that she was in a great fright, which scarcely warrants the inference that she had an evil spirit for her chamber chum. She goes on to say that, at Cambridge, Mr. Ernest Myers advised her to gaze into a glass ball, and it seems probable that she means the late Mr. F. W. H. Myers. But, after much gazing, she saw a man in bed who was more or less like her brother, then abroad. Several months later her family heard of her brother's death in California. Again we cannot infer that the crystal picture was a 'death warning.' I had long ago noticed that when people practise crystal gazing, they often begin by seeing a man in bed, and I had even mentioned the circumstance in print, years before Miss Corkran published her story. Why they start with seeing this purely fancy picture one cannot even guess. Miss Corkran also saw a crystal picture of Lord Leighton, before his death. Such pictures of the living are among the most usual of these hallucinations, and are no more to be regarded as death warnings than any other representation of a thing familiar to the memory of the gazer. Psychological experiment should not be vitiated by superstition.

* * *

The celebrated cricket poet who sings, so to speak, like Homer, at the Oval, and other historic grounds, is said to have made a remark well worth pondering by all literary characters. He expressed, if I am accurately informed, but a modest opinion of the

poetic merits of his pieces. 'Many a man could write them, it is on the selling of them that I rather plume myself.' The *ipsissima verba* I do not pretend to cite, but give the gist of them. They are of wide application. Many men, many women, and many children could write the books of certain popular authors; the selling of them is the true craft and mystery.

* * *

In *Barlasch of the Guard*, Mr. Seton Merriman too openly despises his readers. Apparently he has read Ségur's and other descriptions of the Moscow campaign, and he draws many vivid pictures of the horrors of the rout. These may be new to 'the educated English gentleman,' whom he reproaches with never having heard of Rapp and his allies in the siege of Dantzic. But the educated English gentleman is not, perhaps, so ignorant and prejudiced as the novelist imagines. Mr. Seton Merriman represents the Imperial Guard in the Russian campaign as armed with a musket called the *chassepot*. This weapon, Mr. Mason, in one of his tales, assigns to the French army in 1870: it is not a musket, but a breech-loading rifle. Novelist for novelist, I take Mr. Mason to be correct, and I do not think that the Guard used the *chassepot* in the Moscow campaign. If I am right, it is not Mr. Seton Merriman who should complain of the ignorance of educated English gentlemen. They perhaps may turn on the author, and while gratefully acknowledging the picturesque qualities of his romance, may observe that his long passages of moralising are not only excrescences—a novel is not a sermon—but lack the merit of originality and are dazzlingly rich in the obvious. 'Let us be moral, let us contemplate existence,' said Mr. Pecksniff (or words to that effect), but Mr. Pecksniff was not, on that occasion, quite master of himself. However, many readers may hold the pious theory that 'all sermons are good,' and that we cannot have too many sermons. For my part, I conceive that Mr. Seton Merriman's preachments are drawbacks to his interesting romance.

* * *

After the remarks on the beautiful Stuart ivory coffer at Inverness were in print, I have learned that 'it was not intended to imply that the ivory coffer contained the famous Casket letters.' These, however, were, in 1568, reckoned sometimes as nine in number, eight letters and one set of sonnets. What the other

nine Marian letters, said to have been in the ivory coffer, may have been—those which were consigned to Queen Victoria—I am not informed, and am anxious to ascertain. The coffer is mediæval, and was seen by many amateurs at Christie's, at the sale of the Magniac Collection. I do not remember that it occurs in the inventories of Queen Mary's possessions, but they are not accessible to me at present. The entry about the coffer is a late addition to the catalogue, the interesting objects having arrived after the pamphlet was published. I ought to add that the catalogue had been prepared in haste, and that, apparently, the traditions of the owners of objects exhibited were given.

* * *

In *The Athenæum* of September 12 Messrs. Renier and Luzio clear up the mischance which, without their knowledge, led to the publication of their letter as to Mrs. Ady's *Isabella d'Este*.

ANDREW LANG.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,
39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

INDEX

TO THE FORTY-SECOND VOLUME.

A. C. S., Last Year, 507
Australia as the Flowery Land, by
E. M. Nall, 322

BADGERS AND THEIR WAYS, by H.
A. Bryden, 444
Ballade of Bird's-nesting, by Alfred
Cochrane, 138
Boxer, by Keighley Snowden, 438
Broken Glass, by C. F. Marsh, 161
Bryden (H. A.), Badgers and their
Ways, 444

CAMP-BALL, by C. F. Marsh, 251
Canada in the Sixties, by Paul
Fountain, 237, 407
Christian Thal, by M. E. Francis
(Mrs. Francis Blundell), 1, 97,
193, 289, 385
Cochrane (Alfred), Ballade of Bird's-
nesting, 138

DEWAR (G. A. B.), Lord Lindsey
in the Civil War, 174
— The Stricken Field of Newbury,
481
Drama in the Pine Forest, A, by
F. Wishaw, 60

EGYPTIAN IRRIGATION WORKS, by
Lawrence Gibbs, 550
Ellis (G. Stanley), Scholarship
Howlers, 559
— The Sergeant's Idea, 229
English Agriculture in Retrospect
and Prospect, by C. B. Roylance
Kent, 26

FOUNTAIN (PAUL), Canada in the
Sixties, 237, 407
Francis (M. E.) (Mrs. Francis
Blundell), Christian Thal, 1, 97,
193, 289, 385
Frankland (Mrs. Percy), A Moscow
Philanthropist, 75
French Fleet in Possession of the
Channel, A, by the Rev. J.
Isabell, 154

GIBBS (LAWRENCE), Egyptian Irr-
igation Works, 550
Godley (Eveline C.), A Seven-
teenth-century Duellist, 812
Gore-Booth (Eva), Maevae of the
Battles, 285

HARKER (L. ALLEN), A Small Event,
40

ISABELL (REV. J.), A French Fleet
in Possession of the Channel,
154

JELLYBY'S PLOT, 539

KENT (C. B. ROYLANCE), English
Agriculture in Retrospect and
Prospect, 26

LANG (ANDREW), At the Sign of the
Ship, 86, 183, 278, 375, 472, 563
Last Year, by A. C. S., 507
Loafing-time, by Fred Wishaw, 523

Loch in Orcady, A, by D. J. Robertson, 53
 Lord Lindsey in the Civil War, by G. A. B. Dewar, 174
 Love's Trance, by Walter Herries Pollock, 260

MAVE OF THE BATTLES, by Eva Gore-Booth, 285
 Marsh (C. F.), A Michaelmas Move, 508
 — Broken Glass, 161
 — Camp-Ball, 251
 Michaelmas Move, A, by C. F. Marsh, 508
 Moscow Philanthropist, A., by Mrs. Percy Frankland, 75

NALL (E. M.), Australia as the Flowery Land, 322
 Nature's Comedian, by W. E. Norris, 261, 357, 454, 481
 Night in the Open at 22,000 feet, A, by Major Rankin, 122, 214
 Norris (W. E.), Nature's Comedian, 261, 357, 454, 481

O. R., Why Old Baboon has that Kink in his Tail, 380
 — Why Old Jackalse Danced the War-dance, 421

POLLOCK (WALTER HERRIES), Love's Trance, 260

RANKIN (MAJOR), A Night in the Open at 22,000 feet, 122, 214
 Recollections of a Tenderfoot, by J. R. E. Sumner, 140
 Robertson (D. J.), A Loch in Orcady, 53

SCHOLARSHIP HOWLERS, by G. Stanley Ellis, 559
 Sergeant's Idea, The, by G. Stanley Ellis, 229
 Seventeenth-century Duellist, A, by Eveline C. Godley, 312
 Sign of the Ship, At the, by Andrew Lang, 86, 183, 278, 375, 472, 562
 Small Event, A, by L. Allen Harker, 40
 Snowden (Keighley), Boxer, 438
 Stricken Field of Newbury, The, by G. A. B. Dewar, 431
 Summer Morning, A, by Fred Whishaw, 342
 Sumner (J. R. E.), Recollections of a Tenderfoot, 140

WAGERS, by D. H. Wilson, 499
 Whishaw (Fred), A Drama in the Pine Forest, 60
 — A Summer Morning, 342
 — Loafing-time, 523
 Why Old Baboon has that Kink in his Tail, by O. R., 380
 Why Old Jackalse Danced the War-dance, by O. R., 421
 Wilson (D. H.), Wagers, 499



Maud Muller

"It Might Have Been."

Her Joy was Duty
And Love was Law.

For one of the brightest poetic gems. P.T.O.

MAUD MULLER

MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day, raked the meadow-sweet with hay.
 Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth of simple beauty and rustic health.
 Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee the mock-bird echoed from his tree.
 But when she glanced to the far-off town, white from its hill-slope looking down,
 The sweet song died, and a vague unrest and a nameless longing filled her breast,—
 A wish, that she hardly dare to own, for something better than she had known.
 The Judge rode slowly down the lane, smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.
 He drew his bridle in the shade of the apple-trees to greet the maid,
 And asked a draught from the spring that flowed through the meadow across the road.
 She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up, and filled for him her small tin cup,
 And blushed as she gave it, looking down on her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.
 "Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught from a fairer hand was never quaffed."
 He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees, of the singing birds and the humming bees;
 Then talked of the haying and wondered whether the cloud in the west would bring foul
 And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown, and her graceful ankles bare and brown [weather.
 And listened, while a pleased surprise looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.
 At last, like one who for delay seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.
 Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me! That I the Judge's bride might be!
 He would dress me up in silks so fine, and praise and toast me at his wine.
 "My father should wear a broadcloth coat; my brother should sail a painted boat.
 "I'd dress my mother so grand and gay, and the baby should have a new toy-each day.
 "And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor, and all should bless me who left our door."
 The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill, and saw Maud Muller standing still.
 "A form more fair, a face more sweet, ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.
 "And her modest answer and graceful air show her wise and good as she is fair.
 "Would she were mine, and I to-day, like her, a harvester of hay:
 "No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs, nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,
 "But low of cattle and song of birds, and health and quiet and loving words."
 But he thought of his sisters proud and cold, and his mother vain of her rank and gold.
 So, closing his heart the Judge rode on and Maud was left in the field alone.
 But the lawyers smiled that afternoon, when he hummed in Court an old love tune;
 And the young girl mused beside the well till the rain on the unraked clover fell.
 He wedded a wife of richest dower, who lived for fashion, as he for power.
 Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow, he watched a picture come and go;
 And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes looked out in their innocent surprise.
 Oft, when the wine in his glass was red, he longed for the wayside well instead;
 And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms to dream of meadows and clover-blooms.
 And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain, "Ah, that I was free again!
 "Free as when I rode that day, where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."
 She wedded a man unlearned and poor, and many children played round her door.
 But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain, left their traces on heart and brain.
 And oft, when the summer sun shone hot on the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,
 And she heard the little spring brook fall over the road side, through the wall,
 In the shade of the apple-tree again she saw a rider draw his rein.
 And, gazing down with timid grace, she felt his pleased eyes read her face.
 Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls stretched away into stately halls;
 The weary wheel to a spinnet turned, the tallow candle an astral burned,
 And for him who sat by the chimney lug, dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,
 A manly form at her side she saw, and joy was duty and love was law.
 Then she took up her burden of life again, saying only, "It might have been."
 Alas for maiden, alas for Judge, for rich repiner and household drudge!
 God pity them both! and pity us all, who vainly the dreams of youth recall.
 For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: "It might have been."
 Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies deeply buried from human eyes;
 And, in the hereafter, angels may roll the stone from its grave away!

WHITTIER

What Higher aim can Man attain than Conquest over Human Pain?

The JEOPARDY OF LIFE IS IMMENSELY INCREASED without such a simple precaution as

ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'

How important it is to every individual to have at hand some simple, effective and palatable remedy such as 'FRUIT SALT' to check disease at the onset. Whenever a change is contemplated likely to disturb the condition of health, let it be your companion, for, under any circumstances, its use is beneficial, and never can do harm.

"It is not too much to say that its merits have been published, tested, and approved literally, from pole to pole, and that its cosmopolitan popularity to-day presents one of the most signal illustrations of commercial enterprise to be found in our trading records."—*European Mail*.

Its effect upon any Disordered, Sleepless, and Feverish condition is simply marvellous.

CAUTION.—Examine each bottle and see that the capsule is marked **ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.'** Without it, you have been imposed upon by a **WORTHLESS IMITATION.**

Prepared only by J. C. ENO, Limited,

At the 'FRUIT SALT' WORKS, LONDON, S.E., by J. C. ENO'S Patent.



PEA

LYS

SHE

ALL

HEA

JOA

THE

MO

NAL

COL

CLE

BEA

THE

A G

MIC

THE

THE

THE

'S

SOM

ALL

DOR

WAY

HOP

FAVOURITE FICTION.

RIDER HAGGARD.

PEARL-MAIDEN: A Tale of the Fall of Jerusalem. With 26 Illustrations. 6 0	ERIC BRIGHTYES. With 51 Illustrations 3 6
LYSBETH. With 26 Illustrations 6 0	NADA THE LILY. With 23 Illustrations 3 6
SHE. With 32 Illustrations 3 6	ALLAN'S WIFE. With 34 Illustrations 3 6
ALLAN QUATERMAIN. With 31 Illustrations 3 6	THE WITCH'S HEAD. With 16 Illustrations 3 6
HEART OF THE WORLD. With 15 Illustrations 3 6	MR. MEESON'S WILL. With 16 Illustrations 3 6
JOAN HASTE. With 20 Illustrations 3 6	DAWN. With 16 Illustrations ... 3 6
THE PEOPLE OF THE MIST. With 16 Illustrations 3 6	DR. THERNE 3 6
MONTEZUMA'S DAUGHTER. With 24 Illustrations 3 6	BLACK HEART AND WHITE HEART, and other Stories. With 33 Illustrations 3 6
MAIWA'S REVENGE 1 6	SWALLOW. A Tale of the Great Trek. With 8 Illustrations 3 6
COLONEL QUARITCH. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 3 6	THE WORLD'S DESIRE. By H. RIDER HAGGARD and ANDREW LANG. With 27 Illus- trations 3 6
CLEOPATRA. With 29 Illustrations 3 6	
BEATRICE. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 3 6	

STANLEY WEYMAN.

THE HOUSE OF THE WOLF. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 3 6	THE RED COCKADE. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 6 0
A GENTLEMAN OF FRANCE. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 6 0	SHREWSBURY. With 24 Illustrations 6 0
	SOPHIA. With Frontispiece ... 6 0

CONAN DOYLE.

MICAH CLARKE: A Tale of Monmouth's Rebellion. With 10 Illustrations 3 6	THE REFUGEES: A Tale of the Huguenots. With 25 Illustrations 3 6
THE CAPTAIN OF THE POLE-STAR, and other Tales 3 6	THE STARK-MUNRO LETTERS. With Frontispiece and Vignette... 3 6

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE Sewed, 1s.; cloth 1 6	MORE NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS: THE DYNAMITER. By ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON and FANNY VAN DE GRIFF STEVENSON ... 3 6
THE STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE; with other Fables. Bound in buckram, with gilt top net 5 0	THE WRONG BOX. By ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON and LLOYD OSBOURNE 3 6
'Silver Library' Edition. Crown 8vo. 3 6	

E. C. SOMERVILLE AND MARTIN ROSS.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF AN IRISH R.M. With 31 Illustrations 6 0	AN IRISH COUSIN 6 0
ALL ON THE IRISH SHORE. With 10 Illustrations 6 0	THE REAL CHARLOTTE 3 6
	THE SILVER FOX 3 6

EDNA LYALL.

DOREEN: the Story of a Singer ... 6 0	THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A SLANDER 1 0
WAYFARING MEN: A Story of Theatrical Life ... 6 0	
HOPE THE HERMIT: A Romance of Borrowdale ... 6 0	<i>Presentation Edition.</i> With 20 Illus- trations by LANCELOT SPEED... net 2 6

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.
New York, and Bombay.

NO ALCOHOLIC ADVERTISEMENTS.
NO BETTING NEWS.

DAILY NEWS, 'LONDON'S
BEST.'

A WEEK'S TRIAL IS SOLICITED.

Sold by all Newsagents and at all Railway Bookstalls,
or Post-free, 1 Week 9d., 1 Month 3s., 1 Quarter 9s. 9d.

Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Distinguished everywhere
for Delicacy of Flavour,

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

Superior Quality, and
Highly Nutritive Properties.

"For the Blood is the Life."

**Clarke's
Blood
Mixture**

THE WORLD-FAMED BLOOD PURIFIER,
is warranted to Cleanse the Blood from
all impurities from whatever cause arising.
For Scrofula, Scurvy, Eczema, Bad Legs,
Skin and Blood Diseases, Blackheads, Pim-
ples and Sores of all kinds, its effects are
marvellous. Thousands of Testimonials
of wonderful cures from all parts of the
world. Sold by Chemists everywhere.

MEDOC—VIN ORDINAIRE.

Pure BORDAUX, an excellent light Dinner Wine. The quality of this
wine will be found equal to wine usually sold at much higher prices.

Per Dozen Bots.	1/2 Bots.
14/6	8/3

ST. ESTEPHE.

SUPERIOR DINNER WINE, old in bottle. On comparison it will be
found very superior to wine usually sold at higher prices. The appreciation
this wine meets with from the constantly increasing number of customers it
procures us in London and the Provinces gives us additional confidence in
submitting it to those who like pure Bordeaux Wine.

17/6	9/9
------	-----

2 Dozen Bottles or 6 Dozen Pints delivered Carriage Paid to any Railway Station, including Cases and Bottles.

All who know these Wines tell us there is no Claret sold in Great Britain to equal them in value.
General Price List Free by Post.

Owing to the increased Duty of 6d. per dozen, we very much regret to have to advance the price that amount.

JAMES SMITH & COMPANY, Wine & Spirit Merchants, Limited.
LIVERPOOL: 37 North John Street. **Manchester:** 26 Market Street.

SPOTTISWOODE & CO. LTD., PRINTERS, NEW-STREET SQUARE, LONDON.

